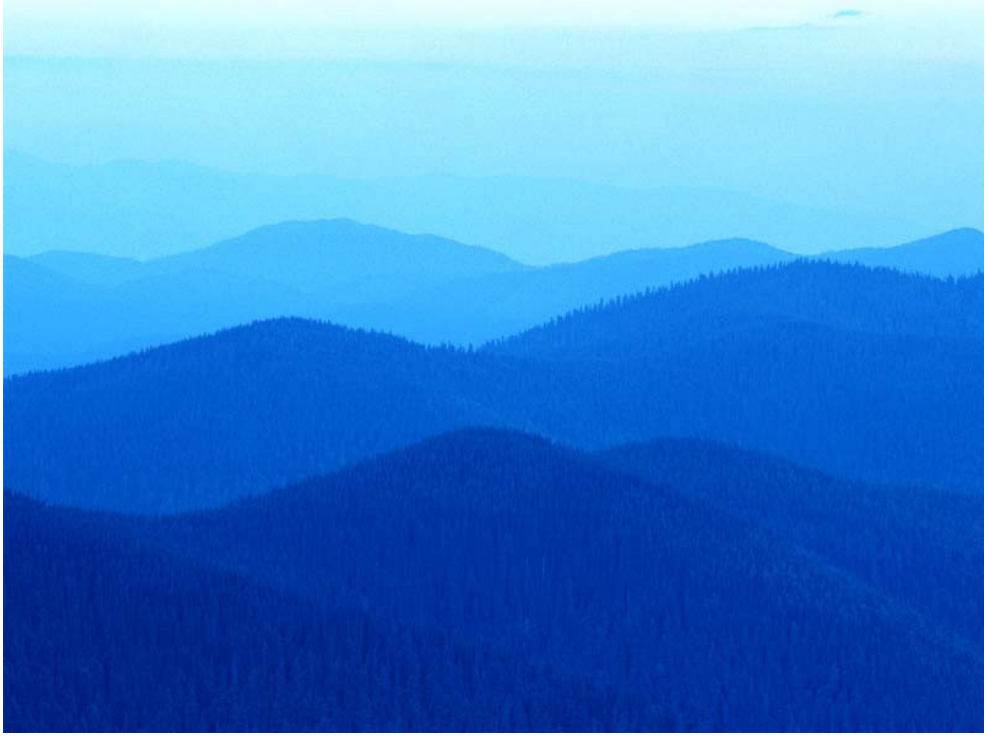
Becoming teacher: Sites for teacher development in Canadian Teacher Education



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Canadian Association for Teacher Education

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TITLE

Becoming Teacher Sites for Teacher Development in Canadian Teacher Education

EDITOR

Lynn Thomas

BOOK DESCRIPTION

In this volume, researchers from the field of teacher education from across Canada have contributed chapters that explore aspects of "teacher becoming" at their respective institutions. These contributions range from research on who can become a teacher in Canada, to when this happens, where becoming a teacher takes place, and how the beliefs that teachers are transformers or agents of change are taken into account in teacher education. This collective publication follows participation in a working conference on the topic of "Teacher Becoming" organised by the Canadian Association for Teacher Education (CATE) that was held at McGill University in Montreal in early November 2012.

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I would like to acknowledge the legacy of Dr. Thomas Falkenberg of the University of Manitoba and Dr. Hans Smits of the University of Calgary for their inspired foresight and wisdom in creating and running the first four Working Conferences on Research in Teacher Education in Canada that were eventually taken over by the Canadian Association for Teacher Education in 2011.

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Grateful thanks also go to Dr. Mark Hirschkorn, president of the Canadian Association for Teacher Education for his collegiality and collaboration in creating the theme and the questions for the Working Conference 2014.

Dr. Claudia Mitchell inspired us all with her opening remarks on research on the lives of teachers in a digital age. She asks: how do teachers live together and how do they see themselves as a community? How do we nurture the social self in teaching and research communities? These were thoughtful words to begin the building of collaborations and exchanges that led to the creation of this book.

Thank you, Claudia.

Introduction

In this volume entitled *Becoming teacher: Sites for teacher development in Canadian Teacher Education*, researchers from the field of teacher education from across Canada have contributed chapters that explore aspects of "teacher becoming" at their respective institutions. These contributions range from research on who can become a teacher in Canada, to when this happens, where becoming a teacher takes place, and how the beliefs that teachers are transformers or agents of change are taken into account in teacher education. This collective publication follows participation in a working conference on the topic of "Teacher Becoming" organised by the Canadian Association for Teacher Education (CATE) that was held at McGill University in Montreal in early November 2012. Having previously submitted a three-page summary of their research that relates to the conference theme, participants met for two and a half days to discuss their summaries, exchange ideas and further their thinking. The resulting chapters form this publication. For further information about the CATE working conferences and previous publications resulting from earlier gatherings, please consult the CATE website at https://sites.google.com/site/cssecate/fall-working-conference

Participants to the 2012 working conference were asked to respond to one of the four following focus questions in their chapters which make up this publication.

- Where should teacher education happen and what form should it take? For example, when we talk about practice-based teacher education, what should that look like?
- Who becomes or should become a teacher? Who is involved in this process of becoming? What qualities do both teachers and teacher educators need to possess? What partnerships are (or should be) involved in this process?

- When does a person become a teacher, and what does identifying that moment mean for learning to become? In what ways can sites for ongoing learning or prior learning be integrated into teacher development?
- Descriptions such as 'teacher as transformer' and 'teacher as agent of change' suggest that teachers need to develop capacities that exceed their socialized repetition of the status quo in education. How important is this aspect of becoming teacher? How should these capacities be developed? How much control does/should teacher educators have in the process?

The book has therefore been organised into four sections, each one dealing with one of the focus questions.

The first question asks where teacher education should happen, and the responses are varied and diverse. The "where" in this question is not limited to a physical location or a geographic place; it is more about the conceptual space for transformation, making meaning, and learning. In this first section, Block and Betts examine how an alternative program structure afforded space for individual and collective agency through a school-based group project as an assignment within a general education course. The chapter "Focusing the "Magic Eye": Exploring Meaningful Contexts for Teacher Learning", by Broad, Baxan, James, Stewart Rose and Wilton, investigates intentionality in the construction of meaningful contexts for teacher candidates to grapple with theory and practice and identifies opportunities to learn from discrepancy and dissonance. Culligan and Kristmanson framed their chapter, which examines an international practicum experience in China, within the literature related to the role of the practicum in teacher education and the potential value of reflection for teacher candidates, particularly when faced with such a change of culture. The pan-Canadian team of Dillon,

Bullock, O'Connor, Martin, Russell and Thomas begin by addressing the long-standing issue of a theory-practice gap in teacher education programs. They highlight the important need for a particular kind of pedagogy, responsive to candidates' teaching experiences, to be used by teacher educators so that they might transcend the typical limitations of teacher education programs. Lemisko, Svoboda and Hellsten ask whether collaborative inquiry enhances professional learning for both pre-service & in-service teachers. By gathering data from both the in-service and pre-service teachers regarding their co-learning experiences, their findings provide insights into the places and spaces where teacher education happens.

Question two asks who becomes or should become a teacher and who is involved in this process of becoming. The study undertaken by Cranston reveals that there are multiple altruistic, intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence participants' decisions to become teachers. His findings show that most held very positive perceptions about the profession, but that many indicated that there are numerous drawbacks to remain in teaching. Ferguson and Childs explored the beliefs of teacher candidates around diversity and equity, and whether these beliefs changed during an initial teacher education program.

Question three is concerned with when a person becomes a teacher, and what identifying that moment means for learning to become. A common thread emerging out of this discussion on 'teacher becoming' was that it is not a linear, lock-step process; rather, the researchers present characterized it as more of a cascade of development catalyzed by disruptive and difficult moments. Hirschkorn, Sears and Ireland argue that teacher education programs can use the admissions process to systematically assess the prior knowledge of applicants and use those assessments as mechanisms to promote double disruption: the disruption of both candidates' prior conceptions and the teacher education program itself. Janzen's work explores difficult moments as described by teachers, and by offering empirically-based understandings of teacher development as uneven

and uncertain, she provokes a reconsideration of how we conceptualize the difficulty of teaching in the becoming of teacher. The chapter by Kathleen Nolan challenges and disrupts traditional discourses of teacher education and associated field experience by tracing the intersections of identity, agency and reflexivity in mathematics teacher education using Bourdieu's sociological theory. Through a critical discourse analysis of data, her research study identifies the difficulties (and potential promise) of disrupting normative practices of schools and teacher education.

Descriptions such as 'teacher as transformer' and 'teacher as agent of change' suggest that teachers need to develop capacities that exceed their socialized repetition of the status quo in education. How important is this aspect of becoming teacher? How should these capacities be developed? The authors of "Teacher Education as a site for philosophical mindedness", Christou and Bullock, propose that an important site for teacher development is internal, particularly the development of philosophical mindedness. Falkenberg argues that what a teacher is aware of, attends to, and notices in pedagogical moments characterizes practical wisdom in teaching and is at the core of teaching and, thus, of learning to teach. Handlarski explores issues of using literature to promote teaching and learning about social equity and diversity for and with teacher candidates. Mooney presents the emergence of a compassionate learning community as a site for faculty development that attends to the whole person, developing and sustaining the teacher's inner life. Based on the transformative framework of critical pedagogy coupled with personal history, Rangoonaden examines pre-service teachers' beliefs and practices when observing and teaching underrepresented populations.

Manu Sharma describes an equity-based initiative that promotes a teaching pedagogy embedded in culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy in the hopes of creating a dialogue between teacher candidates and their associate teachers. Strong-Wilson, Mitchell, Morrison,

Radford and Pithouse-Morgan adopt a theoretical lens of *productive remembering* (Mitchell et al., 2011; Strong-Wilson et al., 2013) to focus on the idea and place of the digital in teachers' memory-work, and introduce the term 'digital memory-work' to refer to the use of digital media to create digital artifacts (e.g., digital albums, collages, stories, movies, photograph collections, portraits, sound recordings) to remember the past so as to change the future. Tanaka, Tse, Stanger, Piché, Starr, Farish and Abra explore teacher engagement with emotion (both their own and that of learners) through the lens of Transformative Inquiry (TI), a dialogic, reflexive, relational and mindful approach to learning to teach. Angelina Weenie elegantly explains that being and becoming an Indigenous educator calls for an added process and responsibility and entails developing capacity beyond replicating the status quo, including becoming a transformer and a change agent within his or her community. Her chapter describes this process in addressing how "indigenizing" education and using First Nations cultural concepts can disrupt dominant discourse.

I hope that this overview of research on the topic of Teacher Becoming will provide you with a sense of the length, breadth and quality of research on teacher education in Canada.

Lynn Thomas

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March, 2014

Part 1

Where should teacher education happen and what form should it take?

Sustaining/Containing Agency in an Alternative Teacher Education Program

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Abstract

Constructing space for agency is critical for any education program. This paper examines how an alternative program structure afforded space for individual and collective agency through a school-based group project as an assignment within a general education course. As instructors and faculty supervisors, we value teacher candidates' personal professional knowledge and their agentic potential to shape their teaching identities in response and in resistance to their experiences in the alternative program. Our image of the program is of a container within which location agentic actions can be constructed and implemented. An action-based notion of agency served as a lens for interpreting themes within the student narratives of their group projects. These themes include (1) teacher candidates experiences of agency as being what one does, not who one is; (2) connecting the teacher candidates' two primary locations, the practicum school and the university, expands the place within which agency is enacted; and (3) the agency experienced by the teacher candidates is not anchored in traditional notions of success or failure. This paper takes place within continuing research on the alternative program. Future work will consider enlarging the types of data used in order to further our constructions of possibilities for agency, and to inform changes and additions to the structure of the alternative program.

Introduction

> …that agency encompasses not just our capacity for social change, but the ways in which our interventions become populated with institutional imperatives and constraints, and thus produce practices that betray our deep investments (Britzman, 1991, p. 81).

Constructing space for agency is critical for any education program. At our institution, we are developing an alternative structure for teacher education. Within this alternative program oriented to social change, teacher candidates explore their ability to produce meaningful educational experiences for themselves, their peers and instructors and their practicum students. As instructors and faculty supervisors, we value teacher candidates' personal professional knowledge and their agentic potential to shape their teaching identities in response and in resistance to their experiences in the alternative program (Betts & Block, 2013). Therefore the alternative program must make places for and construct spaces for agentic activities, collaboration, and critical reflection. Our image of the program is a container within which location agentic actions can be constructed and implemented; this image is enhanced when that container is understood to have a gap or a space which affirms the limitations of any structure (Salverson, 1996). This paper examines how the program constructed space for individual and collective agency through a school-based group project as an assignment within a general education course. An action-based notion of agency served as a lens for interpreting themes within the student narratives of their group projects. The examination of these projects takes place within continuing research on the alternative program and is embedded in the conceptual framework that shaped the alternative program.

Theoretical Framework

> Agency…is not something that people can *have*; it is something that people *do*. It denotes a 'quality' of the *engagement* of actors with temporal-relational contexts-for-action, not a quality of the actors themselves. Viewing agency in such terms helps us to understand how humans are able to be reflexive and creative, acting counter to societal constraints, but also how individuals are enabled and constrained by their social and material environments (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2012, p.3).

We understand "agency" as the ability to act meaningfully in the world. Agentic actions are located within time and place and in interaction with other agents, and within cultural and structural schemas or systems (Biesta & Tedder, 2006; Priestley, 2011). Agency includes the potential to resist and to recreate socio-cultural structures (Hall, 2000). Change occurs through agency: "The importance of distinguishing the projective dimension of agency is to highlight the fact that human beings are able to challenge, reconsider and reformulate their schemas" (Biesta & Tedder, 2006 p.14).

Teacher agency is embedded in the assumption that the educational system is implicated in social inequities and that teachers, individually and in groups, may choose to address those inequities (Block, 2012; Luke, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Teacher candidates, like teachers, may also choose to address inequities; however, their choices take place from within a more regulated institutional framework, that is, teacher education programs, which may reinforce the dominant culture's perspective of teaching as conserving existing values (Britzman, 1991). That framework often structures a culture of "niceness" (Robertson, 1997) and "comfort" (Boler & Zembylas, 2003) that obscures difference and masks social inequities as individual problems

(Sleeter, 2005). Within that culture, "success" is another important value, with its definition uncontested.

As part of our orientation to social change, our pedagogy seeks a movement from the personal to the political, from the individual to the collective. The structure of our program reflects that orientation. Thus, we choose to construct teacher education to include the discomfort of self-critique and of understanding one's complicity in inequities, which may make possible a deeper commitment to social change. A context for examining those inequities and one's complicity in them can be constructed through meaningful associations that provide both comfort and difficulty.

In structuring a teacher education program, it is our belief that the kinds of associations or social interactions, which teacher candidates experience are central. These interactions support the development of a teaching identity grounded in collaboration and community. Community and connectedness becomes the context for agency (Riger, 1993). Collaborative processes are nested within our alternative program, and form a complex adaptive system (Johnson, 2001; Davis, Sumara & Luce-Kaplar, 2008). This system engenders reasons to act and to experience agency. A teacher education program is a complex "social and material environment" within which teacher candidates may or may not experience agency. As a social and material environment whose function is education for teaching and learning, we understand our alternative program as a location which both sustains and contains agency. An image of this dual process of enabling and constraining is "the container and the gap" which Salverson (1996) identified in her study of educational popular theatre. Teaching supports learning by developing a container, a safe location for learning. The strength of the group contains the risk to the

individuals within it. Yet that container must have a gap, a space which affirms the limitations of any structure and makes room for agency.

Just as a teacher has some control of how their students experience agency; so a teacher educator has some control of how teacher candidates experience agency through constructing a context. If teacher agency is understood as an effect of presence and participation in a specific education context (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2012), then teacher candidate agency can be understood as the effect of presence and participation in the practicum school and in the university. If that presence is chiefly "their socialized repetition of the status quo in education" (CATE Working Conference discussion questions, 2012), then it is not understood as agentic.

Some Important Structures of our Alternative Program

It is our belief that the alternative program constructs opportunities for teacher candidates to experience agency; that is, teacher candidates can act meaningfully as teacher learners, within a climate of education as social activity, embedded within complex social and collaborative processes. This section describes some of the structures of the alternative program that we believe support the agency of teacher candidates. Further descriptions of the alternative program can be found in other work (Betts & Block, 2013; Betts, 2011).

Overall Structures

Collaborative processes are supported by a nested system of professional learning communities. For the practicum, teacher candidates are paired to work together with a co-operating teacher and thus provided work both with another learner and with an experienced teacher mentor, also supported by a faculty supervisor. At each host school, a second community

is formed by all teacher candidate pairs working at that school, led by a faculty supervisor, and supported by participation of various educational experts working at the school. This community meets weekly to share learning experiences, and listen to the expertise of field-based educators. Finally, all teacher candidates in the alternative program form an umbrella community, working together to complete all university course work, with opportunities to share learning experiences across the host schools. This cohort is supported by the usual course work structures of a university education program. University instructors may contextualize school experiences and teaching and learning theory. This can occur because the same people are instructors and faculty supervisors, thus a structural gap between theory (at university) and practice (at school) is resisted. The collaborative processes exemplified in the paired teacher candidates, the partner school communities and links between teacher educators, faculty advisors and the teacher candidate cohort amplifies individual and collective inquiry into teaching (Betts & Block, 2013; Betts, 2011).

The fulcrum of university course work within the alternative program is a course called "Foundations of Teaching and Learning," which includes topics such as general teaching methods, how children learn, positive behavior management, planning and assessment. The content of this course is designed to support and complement other course work (e.g., specific discipline teaching methods), and to reinforce linkages between the theoretical understandings of teaching addressed at university and the practical learning experiences within practicum. The course includes contact time at the schools in the form of professional learning meetings, and assigned work that emerges from practicum experiences (e.g., weekly reflection on and discussion of school-based experiences, where teacher candidates are guided to attend to a specific educational issue).

The Assignment: Enacting a School-Based Project

As part of the assigned requirements for the foundations course, the school-based group project was designed for teacher candidates to experience agency. The inspiration for this assignment was that teacher candidates from the previous cohort had voluntarily initiated a school based project at one of the practicum schools in the winter of 2012. Recognizing the meaningfulness of this effort, the foundations course instructor incorporated the school-based project as a required assignment for 2012-13. Although there were some concerns with mandating a school-based project as a required course assignment, our observations of the projects suggest that teacher candidates experienced ownership of the process and its outcomes.

For this assignment, teacher candidates at each host school, as individuals or in a group, are required to design and implement a grassroots extra-curricular initiative intended to address an educational need within their host school. Teacher candidates in the five practicum schools planned and implemented the following projects: Fun, Food, Fitness; Recess Leaders; Aboriginal Games; Family Fun Night, each at one of four schools; and Vermicomposting; Knitting Club, Craft Club and Choir, all at the fifth school. Family Fun Night was a one day event whereas all the other projects were ongoing activities. Each project was approved by the school administration and course instructor, and supported by the faculty supervisor. To assess the project, teacher candidates submitted a proposal, activities log and final reflective report, and presented the valued experiences of the project to the class. The course instructor consulted the faculty supervisors for their impressions. Many of the projects were designed to "leave something behind" that the school could use in the future (e.g., The Aboriginal Games project group created a PDF of all games taught to the children, which has been shared with teachers at the school).

A description of "Family Fun Night" will provide an example of how these projects were implemented. The goal for this school-based project was to bring the community together for fun and educational activities. Family Fun Night was held after school from 5:30 to 7:30 in the school gym on a chilly Wednesday evening in January, after weeks of planning and preparation. The activities, such as face painting, hockey pitch and crafts, were more "fun" than educational. Each activity was designed and run by a teacher candidate, with one teacher candidate working at the food table with school staff and also as a "floater". The event as a whole could have been modeled on similar community events these teacher candidates might have been part of. However, it was also specific to their understanding of the needs of "their" students and families. Their planning process involved consideration of what would work to engage these students and bring their parents with them. For example, they discussed and decided to award raffle tickets for participation, rather than for "winning" at an activity, in order to include a variety of ages and skill levels.

The goal to bring the families to the school was realized. The principal stated it was one of the best attended community events held. Although she, the custodian and three teachers volunteered that night (as well as the faculty supervisor, also first author), the teacher candidates were in the position of not being "supervised" by their co-operating teachers the administration or their faculty advisor. Instead, it was their "show". They were the supervisors, the performers, the managers and the gatekeepers who opened and closed the event.

Agency Emerges from the School Based Projects

The value of teacher candidates performing, managing and gate keeping a project was thematic in our interpretation of the groups' experiences. In what follows, we provide evidence

to support our claim that the school-based projects were a location for teacher candidates to experience agency. We begin with data based on the experiences of faculty supervisors, as they supported the projects enacted at their host school. We also provide data from our observations of the teacher candidates' presentations to the foundations class after completing their projects. The interpretation is focused through our construction of agency, collaboration, and critical reflection.

At one school, the faculty supervisor attested to the collaboration evident within planning the school-based project. The following email (22/9/12) from the faculty supervisor to the foundations course instructor illustrates the collaborative planning process:

> Our group have a couple of exciting ideas on the table - one is a focus on the environment/sustainability; the other with an art focus (school has a strong art focus). [Principal] and I met to discuss possible financial support for a project that might culminate with children's artwork being placed at the University. The students are formulating a plan/plans and we are meeting first week of October with CT's/admin to take it to the next step. Our group was thinking along the line of your groups - to somehow leave a legacy.

The faculty supervisor for teacher candidates running the "Fun, Food, Fitness" project affirmed that "turning it over" to the teacher candidates was valuable. It gave him the opportunity "to see their skills" in play. He witnessed how they supported each other during the activities. Teacher candidates in the cohort would assist the teacher candidate activity leader and address the needs of individual students who were less engaged. These teacher candidates' sense of timing and interactions were constructive. The supervisor stated they were able to "both lead and follow", important teaching positions. After the first activity sessions, he did not stay long: "leaving was

the best thing to do." [Interview March 27, 2013]. This faculty advisor's ability to let go and construct space for teacher candidate agency models how teacher candidates can choose to construct space for student agency.

At another school, the teacher candidates decided to address a school goal of increasing Aboriginal Education initiatives, by leading the playing of Aboriginal Games during recess. The teacher candidates wanted to pursue both Aboriginal games and Aboriginal literature but their faculty supervisor (second author and foundations instructor), advised that they concentrate on the games only, as both would be too much to take on. The teacher candidates sought out and met with an Elder to learn about various Aboriginal games. They taught the children each game in turn during lunch and in a classroom, and then provided leadership to keep playing these games during recess for several weeks during their practicum.

Initially, the supervisor was concerned that the teacher candidates were pursuing Aboriginal games because Aboriginal Education had been identified as a school goal and not because it was a project that they would have pursued of their own accord. If so, was this agentic activity? As the project progressed, teacher candidate agency became apparent in three ways. First, the teacher candidates positioned themselves as choosing to learn something important for teachers – Aboriginal Education was perceived as important because many children in the schools of our province are of Aboriginal heritage and their needs have to be met. Second, the teacher candidates insisted on planning for Aboriginal games and Aboriginal literature, despite supervisor advice to the contrary; they needed to learn for themselves that both initiatives were too much and come to that decision as a group. Finally, the project has continued beyond the completion of the assignment. During their second practicum, the teacher candidates started including more grades and ended the project with a final celebration with the children at the

school. Like the other faculty supervisors, the aboriginal games cohort supervisor found that he needed to play a minimal role. Once the proposal was approved by the school and course instructor, the teacher candidates needed little guidance. They worked out all the details, such as meeting with an Elder, which games to use, preparing materials, accessing classroom space and parental permission.

In a meeting of teacher candidates and their supervisor [Field notes 2/10/2012], the potential for parent participation in the Fun Night was discussed. The faculty supervisor made linkages to her own experiences in that school over the previous year and to her experience in community organization. The supervisor's ability to move from the past to the present and from practicum school to community organizing theory was useful. However, the supervisor had to be careful not to contribute too much or to overtake the discussion. The teacher candidates wanted and needed to own the planning process, both temporally and spatially. That is, teacher candidates were invested in their current perceptions of the community and in their future plans for their school. The place they had been located in by the student teaching office was changing; it was becoming the place where they were locating themselves as capable; as agentic.

The teacher candidates expressed their satisfaction with the event in their professional learning meeting the week after the Family Fun Night. They demonstrated a greater understanding of the dynamics of the community, explored what they had observed of family interactions, reframed their perception of the school as a threatening environment for parents and reveled in the way it all worked out. Later some of the teacher candidates alluded to difficulties among group members. Part of the collaborative process is naming and working with difference.

Faculty supervisors learned to contain their supervision of the projects so as to make space for teacher candidates' agency. Each negotiated this process through their own teaching

position but that negotiation was in turn mandated through the structure of the program and this particular assignment. Teacher candidates' responses to the structuring of their experience through the assignment and to their ownership of their projects were manifest in the presentations of their work at their university class.

A foundations class devoted to presentations of their school-based projects by each school cohort was a location for celebration and for critical reflection. Teacher candidates were asked to share their experiences of the school based projects, where the instructor emphasized a celebration of their accomplishments. The emphasis on celebration by the instructor perhaps shifted the attention of the teacher candidates from presenting information for marks to sharing what they had accomplished with their peers, including the challenges they had faced. The milieu was designed to give precedence to the teacher candidates' experience and to representations of that experience. There was full attendance and the atmosphere was energetic and playful. The presentations included PowerPoint, photo montage, demonstrations, reportage and personal narrative [Field notes 28/2/13]. The variety in presentations attested to the variety of the projects.

The school based project presentations revealed varied reasons for project choice and goals. Some teacher candidates sustained their comfort zone, such as the Choir project. Others stretched into uncomfortable zones. Jokingly referring to gender stereotypes, one male teacher candidate commented on his first experiences with knitting. Another teacher candidate knew nothing about Vermicomposting, but chose to pair with someone who had experience with this environmental strategy. Once embarked on the projects, all teacher candidates demonstrated commitment to their work. As those who pursued Aboriginal games noted, "this is a population of students we need to learn how to teach" [Field notes 12/10/12]. Similar comments about the

importance and school-based need of each project was evident in the perceptions of all teacher candidates.

Teacher candidates' presentations revealed the collaboration involved in the projects. Also evident was how the projects' design and implementation encompassed both personal and social dimensions. A skating event had to be cancelled due to a school lockdown. Teacher candidates had to deal with students' disappointment and their own, from within the social context and factors that necessitated a lockdown. At another school, the social context of a large aboriginal population and administrative focus shaped the decision to concentrate on aboriginal culture.

The instructors noted that the alternative program presentations were very different from presentations we have assigned in other courses. Like methods course presentations, the project presentations were assigned and assessed. However, in this case, the teacher candidates had chosen, planned and implemented the projects. Their implementations of the projects were reported on with the understanding that teacher candidates had generated interactions and events within the school that might impact other events and interactions. Teacher candidates had learned about the school culture from a different perspective than the classroom, an extension of place based learning (Gruenewald, 2003).

The disruption of a pedagogy built on "success" was another significant difference in these presentations from those in our other courses. One group's presentation focused on the difficulties they had encountered in involving students. They described the process of developing their craft club and then asked the rest of the cohort for ideas to improve the project. They could admit the limitations of their agency and their discomfort (Boler & Zembylas, 2003) within the container of the cohort (Salverson, 1996).

In contrast, in the presentation of the choir project, one teacher candidate made a literal leap of joy concerning her attainments, in the face of challenges, during the project. Describing the task of keeping her grade one choir students quiet for ten minutes prior to their performance at the winter concert, the teacher candidate demonstrated how she had whispered in a tiny voice instructions like "make a scary face", "make a happy face" to keep them still and busy. In enacting that strategy and witnessing the choir's performance, she discovered: "I am a teacher!" and she reported that to the cohort with a leap of recognition [Field notes 28/2/13].

Concluding Thoughts

Several interpretations emerge from the data concerning how the school-based project, enacted within the structures of the alternative program, provided opportunities for teacher candidates to experience agency.

Providing teacher candidates a context, that is, places and times for action, facilitates their experience of agency as being what one does, not who one is (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2012. The alternative program school- based project assignment within the foundations course builds on the professional learning meetings and on connections between theory and practice to construct space for student agency. The specifics of the project emerge from teacher candidate interests and from school needs, thus encompassing both personal and social dimensions. Working on projects outside the domain of their collaborating teachers but within the community may configure teacher candidate agency as an interactive responsibility to a complex community of others (Davis, Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 2008).

Connecting the teacher candidates' two primary locations, the practicum school and the university, expands the place within which agency is enacted. Teacher candidates experienced a

connection between the Foundations course and other university work, and their field experiences in the host schools. For example, the Aboriginal games project legitimized and legitimizes the study of Aboriginal education issues both in the field and at university. Teacher candidates noticed their impact on the social and learning experiences of children, noticed because coursework content and assignments privileged these experiences. Others took up opportunities to continue to practice teaching techniques (learned at university and in the field) within locations they were placed in-charge by the school. Connecting these locations augments the potential for agentic activities.

Within the collaborative planning processes supported by the three nested layers of professional learning communities, the teacher candidates experienced individual and collective agency (Biesta & Tedder, 2006). This is perhaps exemplified by the male teacher candidate who enjoyed learning to knit, while teaching children how to knit with his colleagues, while perceiving his gendered experience. In all of the projects, the teacher candidates faced at least some uncertainty. We believe collaborative processes formed a container to support the risk taking of teacher candidates as they faced those uncertainties.

Finally, the agency experienced by the teacher candidates is not anchored in traditional notions of success or failure. That one student leaped, both literally and metaphorically, into agency as part of her Choir project, is tempered by the experiences of other projects: the Craft Club project teacher candidates who shared their struggles to meet goals they had set for themselves; the Family Fun Night difficulties with an unexpected shortage of volunteers the night of the event; the skating event that was rescheduled due to a community lockdown; and various other barriers faced by these students. “Success” is reconstructed by the teacher candidates as adapting to challenges and/or noticing the social change potential of their work.

We intend to pursue strategies for changing the "success" discourse, which assumes standardized measuring tools for success, by constructing connected locations for agentic experiences of critically reflection. We will ask teacher candidates to contrast the discourse of success with their experiences teaching in their practicum schools. In the alternative program, both structure and content are evolving through ongoing exploration and assessment. This paper is part of that critical reflection. As further data are interpreted and analyzed, we can project changes and additions to the structure of the alternative program and further construction of possibilities for agency.

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Focusing the "Magic Eye": Exploring Meaningful Contexts for Teacher Learning

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Abstract

This chapter describes an ongoing quest to better understand connections between theory and practice in teacher education in two initial teacher education programs at a large Canadian university. We investigate the intentional ways that seven teacher educators construct meaningful contexts for the teacher candidates to grapple with theory and practice. We identify the opportunity for teacher candidates to learn from discrepancy and dissonance in unanticipated and complex situations as a key feature. The autostereogram or "magic eye" is used as a metaphor to describe the diverse, fluid, personal complex nature of working with theory and practice in learning to teach.

Introduction

> You can't just be in (an) environment; you have to be in the environment with thinking that parallels teachers' thinking. And then there is a constructed structure, an intentionally designed structure that requires them to continuously return to what they thought they believed, what they thought they knew and to conceptualize and reconceptualize those pieces…
>
> *Serena (Teacher Educator)*

Much of the study in teacher education has focused on divisions or binaries – theory and practice, school and university, practicum/field learning and academic/program learning. The problem of enactment (Darling-Hammond, 2006) or the execution in the classroom of theoretically grounded, research-based knowledge has also tended to emphasize a perceived disconnect between the aspects of knowledge foregrounded in university teacher preparation and the related practice in schools. In the traditional view of teacher education, "the university provides the theory, skills, and knowledge about teaching through coursework; the school provides the field setting where such knowledge is applied and practiced; and the beginning teacher provides the individual effort that integrates it all" (Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1998, p. 133). While acknowledging the role of the beginning teacher in sense-making seems essential, notions of disparate, discrete or completely "situated" elements of knowledge and experience that produce particular kinds of understandings seem essentializing and thus, troubling. The creation of professional knowledge and understanding seems much more complex, multifaceted, dynamic and interdependent than the binaries contained in these quotes would suggest.

Lampert (2010) advocates moving away from considerations of theory as exclusively related to thought and practice as solely about action. Other researchers have explored rethinking the relationship between theory and practice and reconceptualizing the relationships and interactions of universities/schools/field (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Kessels & Korthagen, 1996; Allsopp, Alvarez-McHatton, DeMarie & Doone, 2006). Some have posited new structures and practices in teacher education (Korthagen, Loughran, & Russell, 2006; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Some have tackled the "chicken-egg" debate examining the potential outcomes when either theory or practice comes "first" within an initial teacher education program (Martin & Russell, 2011).

Korthagen (2010) outlines a "realistic approach to teacher education" (p. 407), placing the act of engaging in professional learning *within* the individual teacher candidates and recognizing the immense complexity of the process of learning to teach. He takes into account the multiple elements of learning, including the embodied knowledge of the candidate, the complexity of the processes of learning and the sites of learning. In earlier studies, we have investigated ways to encourage candidates to synthesize learning, to make meaning and to centre coherence-making as their responsibility and fundamental to their experience of learning to teach (Broad, Stewart Rose, Lopez & Baxan, 2013). Underlying these earlier studies was an effort to trouble the binaries, to explore the kind of learning that Korthagen (2010) describes and to consider how these elements can be viewed as deeply linked and important in teacher learning (Boyle-Baise & McIntyre, 2008).

Zeichner (2010) has advocated that the "different aspects of expertise that exist in schools and communities are brought into teacher education and coexist on a more equal plane with academic knowledge" (p. 95) and for greater connection between courses and field experiences

in university-based teacher education (p. 90). He points out that although there seems to be consensus that teachers must learn in and from practice, there is much disagreement about the situations in which teacher learning in and from practice can be educative and enduring (p. 91). He proposes a "third space" in teacher education where the various bodies of academic knowledge and bodies of practitioner knowledge are brought together and treated with equal respect in support of teacher candidates' learning.

This study moves beyond the notion of "third space" and introduces the concept of "meaningful contexts" for learning. "Context" in this instance is used very broadly and is intended to include varied kinds of learning moments, and the truly multiple authentic ways, locations and "spaces" in which this complex, personal learning about teaching can occur. Learning contexts can exist within course work, readings, practice teaching, relationships between educators within the teaching-learning relationship, in field placements, or within the theorizing or problem-solving of a teacher candidate or community of colleagues. Contexts can be created through discussion, action, reflection, questioning, practice or events and experiences.

In order to more deeply understand and explore these multiple "contexts" for learning and meaning-making, we study teacher educators' intentions as they create what they believe to be meaningful opportunities to evoke and support teacher candidates' learning. Holding the tensions of multiple kinds of knowledge and expertise, theory and practice, identities and situations and recognizing that elements must be not just present but linked, we investigate the work of instructors within two initial teacher education programs at a large Canadian university. These teacher educators have intentionally designed a variety of approaches that invite teacher candidates to interact with, trouble, and grapple with theory and practice in order to make meaning, to respond, and begin to gain efficacy in making informed and thoughtful decisions as

teachers. Understanding not only what the teacher educators have identified as effective activities, approaches or assignments and important moments of learning, but also how and why they identified those moments as meaningful were important goals for the research.

Conceptual Foundation

This study of "meaningful contexts" took place within two large initial teacher education programs and is part of a larger exploration about coherence-making in teacher education. The five-year concurrent program and the one-year consecutive program share a common set of foundational principles as well as a *Learner Document* (2011), outlining the capacities for teacher candidate development. The principles that underpin the programs are Teaching Excellence, Equity, Diversity and Social Justice, Research-Informed, Cohort-Based Learning Communities, Faculty Collaboration, School/Field/University Partnerships, and Coherence (Initial Teacher Education, 2013). These shared elements provide a common vocabulary and an overarching set of programmatic "intentions." They also point to some of the inherent "theories of action" in the programs, e.g. the complexity, nuance and challenge involved in learning to teach. The programs are based on the notion that learning to teach "must be conceptualized as a complex system rather than as an event" (Opfer and Pedder, 2011, p. 378; Darling-Hammond, 2006). The components and design of the *Learner Document* (2011) are intended to represent the complexity, depth and breadth of teacher learning.

A key premise of the programs embodied in the *Learner Document* (2011) is that teacher candidates direct their own professional learning and development. Related to this premise is a previously implicit conception of the teacher candidate as "learner" that became more evident through our research. Not only are the teacher candidates seen as leading their learning, they are

also viewed as "theorizing agents" who engage in iterative processes of critical reflection and synthesis of knowledge and practice. Through our study we also came to understand more fully, the influence of teacher educators as theorizing agents themselves and their conceptions of what is meant by theory, which grew more complex, rich and diverse as they engaged in reflecting on their practice.

There are many, varying definitions and views of theory within the literature. Frequently, theory is defined in opposition to practice (Lampert, 2010). Ornstein and Hunkins (2009) refer to Beauchamp's (1981) definition of theory "as the knowledge and statements that give functional meaning to a series of events [and] take the form of definitions, operational constructs, assumptions, postulates, hypotheses, generalizations, laws or theorems" (p. 18-19). These authors propose that effective theories can be applied and used to decide and determine practice, and suggest that "theory should provide a framework with which to conceptualize and clarify important problems and techniques" (p. 19). These descriptions of the interconnectedness, duality and functionality of theory in concert with practice move toward conceptions of the action borne of theory and the thoughtfulness inherent in effective practices. Britzman (2003) proposes that "[t]heory always lives in the practical experiences of us all" (p. 69). She cautions that theorizing "is not an imposition of abstract theories upon vacuous conditions [but rather]…a form of engagement with and intervention in the world" (p. 69). She points to the frequent, routine, implicit and often unconscious use of theories of action in teaching, reinforcing that practice cannot be separated from theory and that theories are developed and reinforced or reframed by practice. Thus, theory informs practice and practice informs theory.

Korthagen's (2010) explication of theory and theorizing particularly resonates with the conceptual principles of the teacher education programs under study. He refers to Kuhn's (1977)

characteristics of a good theory, including breadth and clarity of use and application, consistency with data and other theories, simplicity, and generativity (p. 412). Korthagen (2010) links theory-building to teacher learning using Piagetian theories of cognitive development while also incorporating situational and contextual factors. He describes this framework as beginning with the *gestalt* level which is not purely cognitive but rather holistic and based on practical experiences with emotional and embodied understanding. This then leads to development of *schema,* which are more conscious networks of ideas and principles that are useful in understanding practice. These, upon reflection, may lead to the formation of theory or a more coherent and possibly more generalized arrangement and inter-connecting of the schemata (p. 410-412). The active, critical and conscious effort of applying and developing theories incorporating the teacher candidate and the actions and situation as important elements in theorizing and learning described in this framework link to the view of the teacher candidate as "learner," embodied in the *Learner Document* (2011). This understanding of learning as constructing meaning from multiple sources underpins this study.

Methodology

To examine how teacher educators' intentions for the design and structure of learning connect to the spaces and experiences of teacher candidate learning, we utilized a multiple case study qualitative research approach (Yang, 2005). Using a case study allowed us to approach "a problem of practice from a holistic perspective" (Merriam, 1988, p. xii/Preface) and allowed an in-depth understanding of the situations and the meanings for those involved (ibid).

The study consists of seven cases of individual teacher educators who used various approaches to creating meaningful contexts for learning within the teacher education programs.

The participants were a purposive sample selected from a pool of teacher educators who had self-identified in an earlier program survey as having an interest in exploring the theory-practice connections in their work. All of the respondents have had more than one year of experience as a teacher educator at the site of this study. The majority have been teacher educators at this institution for five years or more. All but one are experienced K-12 classroom teachers. Table 1 details the teaching backgrounds of the participants.

Table 1 Participant Details

Participant	Years at Institute	Details
Mike	6	• Experienced secondary classroom teacher (13 years) • Experience in leading professional learning
Julie	7	• Experienced K-6 teacher (6 years) • Experience in program planning
Brenda	2	• Experienced teacher education (20 years) • Experience in school administration • Experience in leading professional learning
Michelle	2	• Experienced classroom teacher (8 years) • Teaching-learning coach (4 years) • Experience in leading professional learning
Serena	5	• Experienced secondary teacher • Experience in leading professional learning

John	6	• Higher Education classroom experience • Youth advocate; community organizer
Jennifer	4	• Experienced classroom teacher • Experience in leading professional learning

Each teacher educator participated in a single interview carried out by research assistants. The primary data source was the participants' responses as reported in interviews. Other data sources, such as researcher notes and narrative descriptions served as complementary data. Analysis focused on responses to questions regarding their understandings of theory and practice, an approach, lesson, assignment or strategy that they believed has been effective, and the description of a moment when they experienced a teacher candidate(s) making a theory-practice connection.

Data collected has been analyzed following an inductive process (Punch, 2009) and coded to identify key elements through emergence of "patterns and processes, commonalities and differences" (Miles and Huberman, 1994). To reduce researcher bias, a number of techniques, such as thematic coding, concept mapping, and display charts were used (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 1994). Because the study proposed to examine elements of meaningful contexts for teacher learning across seven cases, participant responses were compared using cross-case analysis as it "facilitates the comparison of commonalities and differences in events, activities, and processes" (Khan and VanWynsberghe, 2008, p. 2). New understandings and questions emerged as we looked across the very different approaches and experiences identified by our participants.

Findings and Discussion

The data derived from the study are rich and layered and we have only begun to unpack all that can be learned. Early findings reveal elements of commonality across cases but also important areas of diversity in the kinds of approaches undertaken, in the moments of powerful learning described by the teacher educators and in the teacher educators' ideas about theory and practice.

In this section we provide evidence of the diversity in the understandings, approaches and experiences described by the teacher educators. We then focus a key common element regarding the meaningful contexts which has emerged. It appears that some kind of dissonance or discrepancy is frequently an impetus for learning. It also seems that the learning which occurs, while certainly fostered by the intentional designs created by teacher educators, is frequently unanticipated and results from several elements which collide or overlay. We explore the elements of these planned yet unplanned meaningful moments and then posit a preliminary model of conditions that appear to be part of the creation of "meaningful contexts".

Diversity in the Intentional Learning Designs

When asked to describe a strategy, approach or teaching-learning activity or assignment that they had designed to help teacher candidates (TCs) reflect upon and develop their practice, teacher educators recount a wide variety of intentionally designed activities that occurred in various locations. These ranged from an assignment that asked candidates to respond to position statements about the inner city, to asking teacher candidates to critique the lesson provided by the teacher educator, to engaging in lesson and unit design, to focusing on observation in schools and then analyzing the underlying decisions. Following are three examples that highlight the range of

intentional designs that the teacher educators perceived as important and meaningful. Serena, one of the participants, describes the assignment she constructed to engage teacher candidates in thinking about teacher decision-making early in the year, in an attempt to enrich and deepen an activity in which candidates had simply observed classrooms, participated in a staff meeting and co-taught a lesson in the first few weeks of their teacher education program:

> … I was interested in making it a richer opportunity for the teacher candidates to make sense of what they were seeing as opposed to simply go out, see something, come back with some questions. …So what I ask them to do in all those three cases is write down… all their observations in each of those experiences… What do you see happening? What do you notice about yourself? What do you notice about the kids? Don't make any inferences; just draw as many observations… Then I ask them to draw inferences about teacher decision-making and teacher thinking as a result of those (observations). When they walk into class and they see desks in fours, for example, and the teacher's desk at the back; that's their observation. So what inferences can they draw about the decisions and the thinking that have gone into that? I ask them in the end to construct, I guess, basically a conceptual framework for teacher decision-making and teacher thinking based on this. Then to examine their own beliefs about what they thought teacher decision-making was before this experience, what they've come away believing about teacher decision-making and where they see their own needs in terms of clarifying their own thinking and decision-making processes.

Julie describes an entirely different activity that took place within the university classroom and invited candidates to connect their experience of a teacher educator's pedagogical

decision to use criteria and self-assessment in the writing process, with the ways in which their students might react to a similar pedagogical tool:

> … They had to read the rubric; they had to self-assess themselves after their first draft cover letter, their first draft resume. They had to revise and edit based on their self-assessment and they had to self-assess again and then they had to reflect on it and the reflection involved them taking what they read about assessment and talking about how they feel about using rubrics as an adult. What experiences they've had in their own educational experiences and what experiences they've had in classrooms already with rubrics. So really getting into that whole idea of the conversation about assessment and metacognition so self-assessment and the importance of teaching metacognition to students….

Mike describes a learning experience very deliberately constructed to have teacher candidates interrogate beliefs and assumptions about race:

> … I selected key provocative, evocative statements, put them up on a PowerPoint and have all candidates stand around a circle and if they agree with the statement they are asked to locate themselves in the room or stand outside in the periphery. And why I do that is I want to heighten that we all stand somewhere in response to these statements. What happens is conversations with people in the centre and people on the outside and there's all sort of conversations about being centred out. All sorts of conversations around feeling at risk of making your personal views public and the distinctions around that. We talk about the fact that these are issues of race and often are visible although we leave them often silent... And that it's more comfortable staying in the background, in the shadows, and thinking we're "colorblind" because it's uncomfortable. So I centre race

and talking about race in the room, so they get some practice about what are basically the concepts that are in that reading; … so it becomes quite an emotional space, which is intentional…

We realize that these different effective learning designs are also related to the teacher educators' understandings about the nature and relationship of theory and practice. The teacher educators were also divergent in their orientations to these concepts.

Diversity in Conceptions of Theory

Participants were asked to describe their own understandings of the terms theory and practice and the relationship between the two concepts. The notions held by our participants reveal differences in ideas about theory and the authority of knowledge, ranging from 'embodied' to 'research-based' knowledge, mirroring findings in other studies that theory is 'published work,' 'carefully collected and valued evidence' and 'reasons we do things'" (Smith and Hodson, 2010). The understandings and conceptions about theory that emerge from the data seem to exist on a continuum. Teacher educators seem to view theory on a range from theory as more stable, fixed and externally obtained from peer-reviewed, published academic research, to theory as more fluid, embodied and emergent continually being rethought and reshaped within the individual. A few illustrative examples follow.

a) Theory as stable, fixed, external to teacher educator and teacher candidate:

I guess theory would be what I read. So what other people have written that kind of drives your practice or gives you the underpinning to your practice… I consider

> theory based on research. So what research says and how do you apply research. That's what theory would be for me… I am kind of worried that my definition of theory might not be the right the definition of theory. Maybe I want to call theory book learning. (Brenda)

Teacher educators who view theory as more stable, fixed and external to the candidate focus on research that has been proven effective and connected to evidence-based practice. Frequently, theory is seen as conclusions drawn from published research. They tend to see theory as utilitarian and to be used as a basis for developing practice and guiding instructional decisions. Candidates are not necessarily encouraged to question the research but rather to view it as authoritative. The research-based theories are used to guide and improve teacher candidate practice and are referenced as an explanation for teacher educator instructional decisions.

As Jennifer explains,

> …[W]hen I think of theory, I think of research. I think of things that have been studied and which have maybe formed some type of philosophy or way of thinking; and it's usually research-based in the sense that questions have been asked; they have studied it, they've collected data and have made some type of informed decisions or conclusions based on that data.

Similarly, when asked to define what theory meant to them, some participants describe the research process and the authority they seem to place in "researchers," with the task of the teacher being to understand, apply and integrate theory into their practice. Teacher and researcher seem to be separate entities, working in parallel and in recognition of the other but with separate roles. The sense of teacher inquiry is not to generate new knowledge or ideas but to "test out" and trial existing "findings."

> I'll say theory to me means that… it is sort of the common wisdom around the work that we do. Like researchers that have been studying particular issues have arrived at a place where they can say we think we know this is true at this point. At this point we know this to be true and then we take that information or so-called common wisdom and we sort of generalize it or we make sense of it in our own way and it's used to drive things like our instructional decision-making. It's used to help us revise our worldview or shape certain habits of minds that we think are going to be useful in a classroom context, in teaching, in supporting impactful teaching. (Michelle)

b) Theory as fluid, embodied, and emergent.

Other participants' understanding of theory seems more inextricable from practice and alive within the teacher candidate. These teacher educators' descriptions blur the traditional boundaries between theory and practice and they clearly see their role as helping teacher candidates see themselves as active in the creation, distillation and critique of theory - as theorizing agents. As well, they reference the ubiquity of theory as part of the frame of reference for human action. For example, John states that theory "offers an explanation of a reality, or the world or a particular phenomenon" and that "[t]heory and practice are everywhere, in your families, in your everyday life." John articulates his view of the inseparable interconnection of theory and practice:

> There is no real practice without theory... and I think that theorizing is often based on some set of practices. You have to start the theorizing on a basis of practice. I see them as sort of interconnected. And for me, theory not linked to a practice tends to be harder to digest. But theory linked to practice becomes sort of very exciting and engaging. Some

> TCs and practicing teachers experience theory as disconnected from practice but I don't really experience it that way myself. I think there is often a lot of talk about connecting theory to practice, but… since they are symbiotically related then I kind of see that as a false dichotomy or bifurcation of the two things. (John)

Mike defines theory as "Mental models which help us understand and how we use those mental constructs in our understandings of our day to day activities" and notes that:

> …at core I guess I believe that theory is simply reflective thinking and developing a construct to understand the world. It is about how do these constructs, these mental models help us understand … I think we all operate with theoretical lenses all the time. I think that the distinction between theory and practice is kind of a false notion largely and to me it's just about making clearer that you know those theoretical lens that we are using all the time and how our practices add nuances and understanding to these theories and how those theories help us think more deeply about the practice.

Similarly, when asked to define theory, Serena states that:

> I don't know if I can capture it easily but kind of the framework or the complex combination of beliefs, assumptions and understandings that guide your actions. To me, that's what theory is. So that comes from a variety of different places and the research is one place that it comes from. But we all act on some theories whether or not we know the research… The other thing that I think has changed about my understanding is how I know we construct theories out of practice… I see the way that our constructed theories impact our practice or our understanding of research; the two things kind of intermingle. Also how when we go out and try something and do something, that our constructed theories either they come under attack because I tried something and it now worked and I

> never thought that would work. They come under attack or they are expanded or they are confirmed…

Teacher educators who hold this more fluid view of theory also seem to believe that a core element of their own teaching is helping teacher candidates see themselves as critical and active theorizing agents rather than mere receivers or adopters of externally constructed theories. For example, John articulates, "I do want to treat teachers philosophically as professionals who theorize as well and for them to begin to see themselves that way."

Mike, too, discusses the importance he saw in making more explicit the theories that operate below the surface as teachers act.

> Whenever a teacher enters a room, walks around the room, they are operating with a certain theoretical understanding of how students learn, how students interact with each other, their roles as teachers in the production of knowledge, they're operating with all these theories all the time. So I think that you know the more we are self-aware about those constructs that we are using, the more it helps with being deliberate and intentional around how we interact in the classroom.

Teacher educator views of theory have emerged as central to the work of teacher education. However, there is diversity in the ways theory is understood, utilized and made explicit in the teaching and learning process in the teacher education classrooms. As we review these quite dissimilar viewpoints or "theories in use," it is apparent that these differences reflect the teacher educators as "theorizing agents" leading us to consider how this might be experienced by teacher candidates as they work with teacher educators with divergent notions across their program.

As we consider these differences in teacher educator orientations and the learning designs in use, we see that these differences were not necessarily confounding or problematic. Rather, we are aware of the importance of individual teacher educator worldviews and understandings and how these influence the nature of the context designed for teacher candidate learning. We see the value in the multiple perspectives within the program and the potential for rich teacher candidate learning as they encounter experience and then work with the differences. Candidates might be introduced to a wide variety of understandings of theory and perspectives on candidates' role in understanding, applying, constructing or troubling theory which could generate deep learning. However, we wonder whether as a program, we have created 'meaningful contexts' for candidates to encounter and grapple with the diversity of perspectives, identities, approaches and understandings of theory, practice and knowledge and then to reflect upon them across the entire program.

Dissonance as a Common Factor in Making Meaning

Further learning from the participants helps to shed light on ways to think about divergences in thought and action. Early analysis of the data demonstrates that dissonance or discomfort caused by the interplay of different experiences, understandings, viewpoints and approaches seem to be a key part of the meaningful contexts that the teacher educators aimed to construct.

Several participants discuss the importance of deliberately creating discomfort or dissonance. Mike explains his belief that discomfort "pushes the (teacher candidates) to a place where they are really pushed to reflect on their prior assumptions."

Several of the teacher educators believe that "if TCs are put in a position that deliberately creates a little bit of difficulty, discomfort, dissonance in a generally safe learning environment, then suddenly space opens up because they now have a question; they have a hunger…" (Serena).

The central importance of dissonance or discomfort surfaces again and again when teacher educators describe moments when teacher candidates made connections between theory and practice. For example, when describing her observation/inference assignment, Serena notes the impact on teacher candidates in the following way:

> …their own realization that by watching, I thought teaching was just this. And it really becomes eye opening for them how much they didn't realize happened behind the scenes. They don't mean just the work that happened behind the scenes; it's the thinking that happened behind the scenes. So it's from that assignment, that's what I hear them say a lot; that TCs make that kind of connection. It opens them up to kind of thinking about what are the theories that I have in place and what I need to learn about in order to be able to make those type of decisions in the moment….

In describing the purpose behind his inquiry activity and the resulting impact on teacher candidates, John comments:

> …So often teachers don't know enough about the communities in which the schools are housed… for that assignment I often have them interact with people or try to have a conversation with them about how long they've been in the community and everything like that. So that's a little weird of course because it is sort of a cold call but for people to take the risk to do that it often yields some interesting insights about the community and

> the neighborhood and what people think about the school and the youth that are in that community…

Mike also labels the impact of his efforts to create discomfort as a type of realization and values the accompanying dissonance that his activity creates:

> …with the kinds of case studies activities that we did people kind of realize that this is complicate. They realize "I am uncomfortable with this" and have an increased, heightened realization, as some have it to a great degree already, but many have a heightened realization that no matter where they stand, they are implicated around issues of culture, social identity, race, all that stuff. And no matter if they say so they become very filled with this sense of anxiety like if I talk about it I run the risk of offending; if I don't talk about it I run the risk of offending… And so I think that particular activity really heightens those senses... that sense of dilemma and that sense of no matter where they are as a teacher that they are always making choices that are always going to have implications.

Planned Meaningful Contexts and Unexpected Learning Moments

A final emerging revelation from the data is that the learning which grew from intentionally designed meaningful contexts was often unexpected and personally derived by the teacher candidates. The instructors' planned approaches often created conditions for deep learning that were unplanned and not necessarily linear, but emergent, organic, personal and rich. Frequently the learning described by the teacher educators was a result of their efforts to provide a meaningful learning opportunity but it was either unanticipated or slightly different, as a result of a recursive and iterative process of learning and theory-making within the teacher candidates.

Mike describes learning that occurred when a teacher candidate was using anti-racist pedagogies from her university course work in her practicum school classroom:

> **…** All of a sudden (the candidate) introduced race into the classroom and she thought she was doing this very progressive, kind of inclusionary way and it actually backfired and it raised a lot of feelings of discomfort and harm in her classroom which she was really unresolved with. So I think the word grapple is in there around decision-making and I think that's really at the core. …. I mean I think provide them opportunities to understand that grappling with it is something that they have to (do) and feel some degree of discomfort …

Michelle articulates the learning that the candidates experienced as they analyzed a university class, in which she provocatively introduced the importance of student cultural knowledge and capital,

> … Well, as of now I am reading their reflections from the sessions and I hear common things like, I totally never thought that it was important for me to even know about students' family structures, or where their parents were born, or whether they were born in Canada or another country. I never thought of those things…this is one candidate saying… 'I never really thought of that... I never thought of getting information like that and I never really saw how that's connected to teaching. I didn't get that I can use that information to help drive my program but yeah I can totally see now where I can go with that'….

An Emerging Model of Meaningful Contexts: The Magic Eye

The findings regarding diversity, dissonance and unexpected learning have lead us to a partial and developing model of elements that seem to have the power to create meaningful contexts. We recognized that the development of the teacher candidates as learners who can draw upon varied bodies of knowledge and understanding in order to make informed and responsive pedagogical decisions in the classroom is a program goal. We also saw that creating the conditions for encouraging candidates to develop these skills, practices and habits of mind of was frequently the intention of the teacher educators. However, the mechanisms, structures, approaches and experiences which lead to those moments where meaningful contexts emerge were often the moments of discomfort and frequently happened serendipitously, as various planned elements collided in the experiences and reflections of the teacher candidates.

It seems that the teacher educators can intentionally provide conditions and experiences that might lead to dissonance or questioning but it is often the teacher candidate's own experience of the elements that make the context meaningful and lead to deep learning. Thus, there are multiple methods utilized by the teacher educators and there are common elements in the experiences of a meaningful context: dissonance, synthesis and multiple/recursive opportunities to make connections between theory/practice and reflect in and on action. And yet, despite the intentionality and consistency of the elements, the meaningful learning that happened in "real time" was frequently due to unplanned though not necessarily unexpected discrepancies, discomfort or disconnections.

During our analysis, we began to envision various elements that come together and overlap in various ways to encourage meaning-making and transformation of understanding and practice. Initially, we discussed Venn diagrams, but then had a clear sense of multi-

dimensionality and so the circles became spheres. We had a sense of standing back as one does from a "magic eye" illustration or random dot autostereogram (a hidden 3D scene emerges from the pixel arrangement when the image is viewed with the correct vergence) and seeing four 3D spheres that overlay in various ways to create meaningful contexts. The 3D spheres are composed of multiple elements that we are still uncovering, but for the moment fit into four large categories: Teacher Candidate, Teacher Educator, Theory and Practice (Figure 1). Within the spheres of Teacher Candidate and Teacher Educator exist individual identities and background experiences, their theories of action and knowledge bases, etc. The Teacher Educator sphere may also include others in the community of practice including other candidates, the associate teachers, community members and, of course, the students who are our most effective teachers. The Theory sphere could include the "canon" of accepted concepts (e.g. theories of development and learning), readings and other inputs, pedagogy, students, instruction, assessment, etc., as well as questions, critique and analysis. Those elements, such as pedagogy and students, also exist in the Practice sphere which also incorporates relationships, planning, problems, mistakes or conflicts, demands, experiences, etc. At any given moment within a planned learning design or experience, a different sphere may be foregrounded or may shift to cause learning or theory-practice connections.

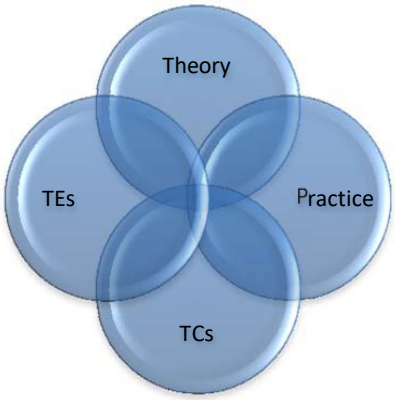

Figure 1. Four spheres: Elements that encourage meaning-making and transformation of understanding and practice.

Although, as with any magic eye diagram or autostereogram, our vision is incomplete, we have begun to see that when the spheres overlap in a particular way, a meaningful context may appear. For example, when Serena intentionally designed the observation and inference activity, she was acting in her Teacher Educator sphere drawing upon her own understandings of theorizing. The candidates engaged in the Practice sphere of uncritically observing in the classroom and then attempted to examine and attribute plans and decisions based on the Theory sphere of readings and "reading" the situation. The Teacher Candidate sphere embodied their experiences as students and teachers. As those four spheres came into contact and connect (Figure 2), the candidates in multiple and individual ways experienced meaningful contexts, in which they begin to realize that teachers in classrooms act as theorizing agents in practice.

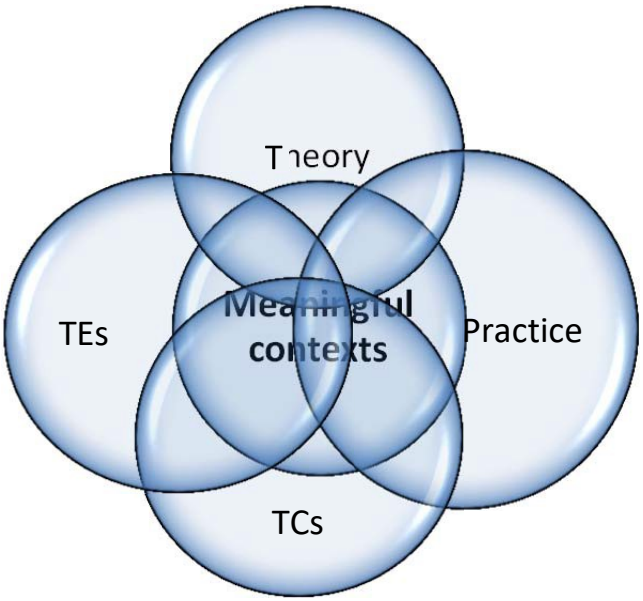

Figure 2. Spheres with meaningful context overlay

We see this framework as in some ways attempting to capture the complexity of learning to teach articulated in the writing of Darling Hammond (2006), Lampert (2010), Korthagen (2010), Opfer and Pedder (2011), Russell (2008), and many others. Our learning from the data so far underscores the additional complexity of the unplanned or naturalistic moments that bring the elements into sharper focus, highlighting that not only must teacher education programs be intentional in design and execution but also extremely responsive to moments of discord and opportunity.

Implications

This meaningful contexts study leaves us as researchers and program designers with many new questions and considerations. One important next step will be to move into the next phase of research that involves asking graduates of the programs about their experiences and understandings of meaningful contexts for their own learning. We hope to trial our emerging framework with them and also to hear from them about what helped them to make meaning and to see themselves as theorizing agents.

As we consider the multi-dimensionality of the spheres, we also want to consider more deeply who and what elements are incorporated in each sphere. For example, a study of meaningful contexts seems incomplete if the teacher educators located in schools serving as associate teachers are not thoughtfully included. Their perspectives seem important to developing a more complete understanding of the process, a more clear vision of our framework and perhaps an enhanced, shared commitment to assisting candidates to become critical, thoughtful theorizing agents themselves.

Other insights also seem important for programming. In his article about realistic teacher education and effective pedagogy, Korthagen (2010) writes about "interventions that teacher educators should use to promote the intended learning process in the student teachers" (p. 419). He also advocates for consideration of the organization of the program (p. 419). The findings of the meaningful context study have led us to understand that while it is important to be intentional in programming and experiences, we must also deepen our capacity to respond to meaningful contexts for learning as they emerge. We cannot necessarily predict which 'interventions' will be meaningful for individual teacher candidates or in what ways they may be meaningful.

Instead, we need to become more explicit and metacognitive with the teacher candidates and with ourselves, as teacher educators, about what we understand to be important in the process of learning to teach, including understandings of each educator as a theorizing agent. As teacher educators, we need to foster self-awareness and ability to articulate our own theories and acknowledge our own spheres and meaningful contexts. As Russell (2008) indicates, we need to be metacognitive and understand our learning as teacher educators in the way we consider the learning of our candidates and ask them to be explicit and aware of their learning processes.

Additionally, we have come to realize that some of the dissonances experienced by the candidates relate to their expectation for similar messages and "theories" to be shared across the program. We need to prepare candidates to expect not ONE message or theory or idea but many messages and some that may seem to compete. We need to help them to see that their work as theorizing agents may be to trouble and incorporate the competing notions into their 'schemata' as they expect and experience dissonance and discrepancy not only in moments or in traditionally considered 'Theory' and 'Practice' spheres but also across the components and courses in the program that may present different but valid ways to consider experiences, problems, theories

and situations. The program can also serve to create meaningful contexts with opportunities to experience dissonance with the support of multiple perspectives that lead candidates to challenge, unearth or articulate new theories and experience moments of insight and growth.

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Becoming Teacher: Influences of a Practicum in China

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Abstract

Set in the context of an international student teaching practicum in China, this study examines data collected from participants prior to, during and after this experience. This research is framed within literature related to the role of the practicum in teacher education and the potential value of reflection for teacher candidates as well as studies related to other international field experiences. Using a qualitative case study methodology, the data gathered provide insights into the experience of seven Canadian teacher candidates doing an 8-week practicum in China. Expectations, reflections, accounts, and observations of the participants were analyzed and six themes emerged- A Trial Run, "Large Life Experiences", Cultural Observations, ESL Realizations, "Normal" Practicum Experiences, and Support. Results of this study revealed some of the learning potential from these international experiences and led to recommendations for faculties of education considering this opportunity for teacher candidates.

Introduction

Becoming a teacher requires a complex combination of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. These three elements are developed, honed, and revised throughout a teacher's professional life. Although in teacher education we often define the beginning of this professional development as the initial teacher preparation program, some have argued that the development of certain characteristics starts long before teacher candidates enter these formalized programs (e.g., Falkenberg, 2010; Hirschkorn, Sears, Sloat, & Sherman, 2011). Dispositions such as resilience (e.g., Tait, 2008), compassion (e.g., Conklin, 2008), and honesty and respectfulness (e.g., Osguthorpe, 2008), which are valued in teacher candidates sometimes have their origins in experiences outside and prior to initial teacher preparation.

Although we recognize the importance of prior knowledge and experience, in this chapter, the focus is on the professional and personal development that can occur within the initial teacher preparation program. In particular, we examine the practicum as one of the sites where this development could take place. These practice sites have been viewed by many as one of the most significant places of learning related to becoming a teacher (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Korthagen, Loughran, & Russell, 2006). In Canadian institutions, most teacher candidates spend time in Canadian public schools in order to experience the realities of the day-to-day life of a teacher and put into practice their burgeoning knowledge. More recently, with a growing need to be responsive to an increasingly diverse Canadian student population and with the globalization of the education job market (Association of Canadian Deans of Education [ACDE], 2005), some teacher education programs have been experimenting with international practica as a potential site for the professional and personal development of teacher candidates (Maynes, Allison, & Julien-Schultz, 2012; Riches & Benson, 2011). Canada is not unique in this regard;

several recent studies set in US contexts have also documented forays into international practica for teacher candidates (Marx & Moss, 2011; Ozek, 2009; Pence & Macgillivray, 2008; Willard-Holt, 2001). In this chapter, examine one such experiment at a Canadian university, and explore the insights and experiences of teacher candidates who participated in this new opportunity.

Theoretical Concepts and Background Literature

This study, similar to others set in the international practicum context, situates itself within two theoretical stances: a) the important role of the practicum in initial teacher preparation, and b) the need for reflection as a way to make meaning of field experiences. In addition, literature related to studies of other international practicum experiences is also important to explore as it reveals potentially unique features of this particular context.

To begin, we acknowledge the contribution of literature that attests to the important influence of field experiences as part of the professional development of teacher candidates. Far from a new concept, the idea that teacher candidates need time in classrooms (or other educational community placements) in order to put into practice their growing skills and knowledge about teaching has been part of teacher education literature for more than 50 years (Cruikshank & Armaline, 1986). In its earliest form, the practicum was seen as an apprenticeship, a way to observe and learn the work of a teacher. More recently, the practicum has been reframed as a reflective activity that encourages teacher candidates to make connections between theory and practice (e.g., Collier, 1999; Lee, 2005; Loughran, 2002). At its core, practice teaching has been seen as a way to help teacher candidates understand and respond to "the dense and multifaceted nature of the classroom" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 305). Moreover, and of particular interest to the present study, Darling-Hammond (2006) has

challenged schools of education to broaden their view of practice teaching and "design programs that help prospective teachers to understand deeply a wide array of things about learning, social and cultural contexts, and teaching and be able to enact these understandings in complex classrooms serving increasingly diverse students" (p. 302). This study is indeed situated in a larger context of an 11-month initial teacher preparation program that values a continual and embedded practicum and is beginning to explore ways for teacher candidates to gain experience working with students from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Pivotal to both the philosophical and methodological aspects of this study is the concept of reflection. As is evidenced in the *Accord on Initial Teacher Education* (ACDE, 2005), the development of reflective practitioners who do not simply engage in observation, but also "discernment, critique, assessment" (principle 2) should be a priority of teacher education programs. Studies related to teaching practica in general (e.g., Collier, 1999; Lee, 2005; Liakopoulou, 2012; Loughran, 2002) and those related specifically to international practica (e.g., Marx & Moss, 2011; Maynes et al., 2012; Pence & Macgillivray, 2008) underscore the importance of reflection as a way to contribute to meaningful professional and personal development as a teacher.

In her article related to reflective thought, Collier (1999) proposed an interpretive framework based on the seminal work of researchers such as Schön (1983, 1987) and van Manen (1977, 1995). Combining Schön's typology of reflection-on-action, reflection-in-action and reflection-for-action and van Manen's levels of reflexivity, she developed three categories of reflection: a) technical rationality (reflection related to skills and knowledge); b) practical action (reflection related to problem solving), and c) critical reflection (reflection that leads to understanding about social, cultural, philosophical or ethical issues). These three categories

provide another theoretical lens through which to examine the data collected in this study through focus groups and interviews. In addition to meetings between cooperating teachers, supervisors and teacher candidates, and debriefing meetings held when teacher candidates returned to Canada, the present study itself provided the reflective mechanisms through which to make sense of the international practicum experience.

In an international practicum, teacher candidates are not only faced with the realities of the classroom, but also with worldviews that may be quite different from their own. Many of those who have studied the international practicum experience have noted the role of reflection in helping teacher candidates deconstruct and reconstruct their experiences in order to make personal and professional meaning (e.g., Maynes et al., 2012; Ozek, 2009; Pence & Macgillivray, 2008; Riches & Benson, 2011; Willard-Holt, 2001). In particular, Pence and Macgillivray (2008) stated that, "stepping outside one's comfort zone and reflecting on one's reactions can help pre-service teachers become more flexible and reflective practitioners" (p. 16). Although reflection is a necessary component of any practice teaching experience, those set in international contexts usually have a particular cross-cultural component made more meaningful through reflective activities. Several researchers have surmised that reflection is key to unpacking learning and growth that may result from these international experiences. For example, Maynes et al. (2012) stated that, "reflection clarified beliefs and the relationship between expressed beliefs and practices or intended practices" (p. 78). Pence and Macgillivray added that "reflection and feedback played an important role in personal and professional growth" (p. 23).

Reflection can help teacher candidates to make sense of their practicum experience. The context in which it takes place will likely influence their personal and professional growth. In the case of an international practicum, teacher candidates develop a "contextualized understanding"

(Villegas and Lucas, 2002, p. 137) that may include elements such as global mindedness (Cushner & Mahon, 2002), cultural self-awareness (Marx & Moss, 2011), personal and professional change (Willard-Holt, 2001), and the valuing of cultural diversity and intercultural understanding (Maynes et al., 2012). Guided by *situative theory* [1], Cushner and Mahon (2002) have suggested that, "to meet the needs of the 21st century, schools must successfully teach many more students from increasingly diverse backgrounds while preparing them for a much more complex, interdependent world that most teachers themselves are not familiar with" (p. 45). For example, situated in an African developing world teacher context, Maynes et al. (2012) concluded that, "they [participants] have made shifts in their worldviews toward more inclusive, compassionate, interdependent, and respectful understanding of another culture" (p. 86). In addition, Willard-Holt (2001) documented American teacher candidates' development of cross-cultural understandings through a study set in a short-term practicum in Mexican schools. Relevant to the present study, reflective data were examined for emergent themes related to a practicum situated in schools in China.

Research Questions

Using Creswell (2003, 2007) to guide us in devising a focus for our research, the purpose of our qualitative case study, using data collected prior to, during, and after an international practicum, is to understand the international practicum experience for teacher candidates enrolled in a B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education) program at a Canadian university. We examine the experience in terms of its general contribution to professional growth as well as its particular influences

[1] *Situative theory* emphasizes the importance of context in an individual's learning and posits that different situations provide teacher candidates with different ways of knowing (Putnam and Borko, 2000, as cited in Cushner & Mahon, 2002).

related to the context in which the practicum was situated—Chinese schools where English is the medium for at least 50% of the instruction.

In order to explore the expectations, experiences, and reflections of a particular group of teacher candidates who participated in an international practicum, we addressed three research questions:

1. What are teacher candidates' expectations prior to completing an 8-week practicum experience in China?
2. What are teacher candidates' experiences while completing an 8-week practicum experience in China?
3. What are teacher candidates' reflections after completing an 8-week practicum experience in China?

Context of the Case Study

This study was set at a Canadian post-secondary institution in Eastern Canada in the context of a new international teaching practicum opportunity for teacher candidates in an 11-month B.Ed. program. Teacher candidates were invited to apply in November for the 8-week international experience that took place from March 20 to May 11. The sites for the practicum experience were three schools in China (Beijing, Tuonli, and Shenzhen) that had already been working in partnership with the provincial department of education for several years. Both elementary and secondary schools as well as Chinese and international schools accepted teacher candidates for practica. Eleven teacher candidates were selected for this field experience, 10 of whom participated in at least one phase of data collection for this study. Table 1 shows the

participants and their level of participation, as well as information about the schools and practicum placements.

Table 1 Participants and Practicum Placements

Pseudonym	**Location**	**Level**	**Type of School**	**Participation**
1. Abby	Shenzhen	Elementary	International	Pre/Dur/Post
2. Beth	Shenzhen	Elementary	International	Pre/Dur/Post
3. Heather	Shenzhen	Secondary	Chinese	Pre/Dur/Post
4. Debbie	Beijing	Secondary	International	Pre
5. Gail	Beijing	Secondary	International	Pre/Dur
6. Irene	Beijing (Tuonli)	Secondary	Chinese	Pre/Dur/Post
7. Jackie	Beijing (Tuonli)	Secondary	Chinese	Pre/Dur/Post
8. Pat	Beijing (Tuonli)	Secondary	Chinese	Pre/Dur
9. Cathy	Beijing (Tuonli)	Secondary	Chinese	Pre/Dur/Post
10. Frances	Beijing (Tuonli)	Secondary	Chinese	Pre/Dur/Post

Note. "Pre", "Dur", and "Post" refers to the phases of data collection of the study. "Pre" meaning the pre-practicum focus group interviews, "Dur" meaning the during-practicum journal, and "Post" meaning the post-practicum focus group interviews.

For the present study we have decided to focus on the data of the 7 participants who participated in all aspects of the study in order to examine the themes and threads interwoven throughout the experience. Given our theoretical stance, we feel that, although all of the data is

valuable and will be explored in future papers the most pertinent data are those that follow the participants through the entire experience and the entire reflective journey.

Methodology

This study used a qualitative case study design (Creswell, 2007, 2008; Merriam, 2009). Stake (2005) has identified three types of qualitative case study: intrinsic, instrumental, and multiple. Our case study could best be described as "instrumental", in that it has allowed us to "gain insight" and has "facilitat[ed] our understanding" of teacher candidates' experiences with an international practicum (p. 445). While some define case study research by focusing on the process of inquiry (e.g., Yin, 2003) and others by focusing on the case as a unit of study (e.g., Stake, 2005), Creswell (2007) provides a useful and quite thorough definition of qualitative case study that blends these two foci. He defined case study as:

> a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a *case*) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving *multiple sources of information* (e.g., observations interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case *description* and case-based themes [original emphasis]. (p. 73)

Qualitative case study proved a good choice of methodological framework since, in this research, "*one* particular program [original emphasis]" (Merriam, 2009, p. 41), the international practicum program in the B.Ed. at a particular university, represents a bounded phenomenon. Furthermore, the bounded nature of the unit of study implies a limited number of participants, another key characteristic of qualitative case study research (Merriam, 2009). Finally, our inquiry focuses on contemporary events (i.e., the international practicum), rather than historical, allowing

us access to participants, and data collected via documents and interviews. However, we had little to no control over behavioural events and thus did not manipulate relevant behaviours to any extent. These characteristics of our research context are also key tenets of case study research (Yin, 2003).

Data Collection

In keeping with data collection methods using multiple sources of data (Creswell, 2007), this qualitative case study used interviews and documents to address the research questions. We collected *personal documents* (Merriam, 2009), in the form of journals, which are a particular type of document focusing on participants' perspectives (attitudes, beliefs, views) and are thus valuable for qualitative research. Some participants also completed a written reflective paper at the end of the practicum, and we were able to include these in our data as well. We also conducted semi-structured focus group interviews (Morgan, 2002) that allowed participants to not only explore their thoughts related to the research questions but also reflect on other related topics that were important to them.

For this qualitative case study then, interview data and documents were collected as follows: pre-practicum focus groups (or individual interviews if required or requested), during-practicum journals housed on a *Desire2Learn* (D2L) online platform, and post-practicum focus groups (as well as written reflective pieces from seven participants). In this study, both researchers had a background in phenomenological research and experience with phenomenological interviewing. While this research was not primarily phenomenological, the nature of the interviews reflected researchers' backgrounds. Interviews were open-ended and followed a protocol that incorporated open-ended questions and allowed for flexibility and

prompting. Questions were designed to allow participants to speak freely and to thus elicit responses that reflected participants' experiences and perceptions (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009; van Manen, 1997). (See Appendix A.)

The pre-practicum focus group took place three weeks prior to the teacher candidates' departure and was approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes in duration. This group interview centred around the first research question, providing data related to participants' expectations and general thoughts before leaving for China. The during-practicum journal provided three open-ended prompts encouraging teacher candidates to recount experiences related to their practicum and to their day-to-day life in China. At times, the researchers encouraged participants to expand their journal entries by using prompts such as: "Can you tell me a little more about…" or "Is there anything else you can add about…".

The concluding data collection method was a post-practicum focus group using three prompts related to the third research question. This interview was approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes in length and took place one and half weeks after the teacher candidates returned from China. In addition, seven participants, who were also registered in the Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language (CTESL), submitted a written reflective paper for a related course and gave researchers permission to include these data in the study. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze the qualitative data collected from these three sources, the data were first examined as separate entities. In this way, the pre-practicum focus group transcript was read and explored in order to determine the themes emerging at this stage of the practicum. Using

qualitative data analysis procedures described by Merriam (2009) and Creswell (2003, 2007), we undertook a preliminary exploratory analysis during which we gained a general sense of the data and memoed our ideas. We next divided the text into segments of information, and quotations providing insights relevant to the research questions were highlighted. After this process was completed, data were coded through reoccurring and common themes. As the data were explored we continued our memoing technique, which provided reflective notes that facilitated the interpretative process. Finally, data were grouped and regrouped and codes were collapsed to determine the final emergent themes and subthemes. This same process was used for each of the other groups of data: the journals, and the post-practicum transcripts and reflective papers. After each data set was examined, further analysis was required in order to explore the possibility of common threads that ran through all of the data.

Results

Results of this study revealed several emergent themes particular to each of the phases of the practicum—pre, during and post—as well as a few common that tied the data together. After initial examination of all of the data, nine themes emerged from each of the three data sets (see column 1 of Figure 1). We further examined the data for threads that linked themes together and related particularly to the practicum experience and to the professional and personal development that were evidenced through the three groups of data (see column 3 of Figure 1). It was in this second extensive exploration that the threads for this paper emerged. These included: A Trial Run, “Large Life Experiences”, Cultural Observations, ESL Realizations, “Normal” Practicum Experiences, Support. Figure 1 is a visual representation of the emergent themes from each of the

phases of data collection and of the larger emergent themes that were present throughout the data.

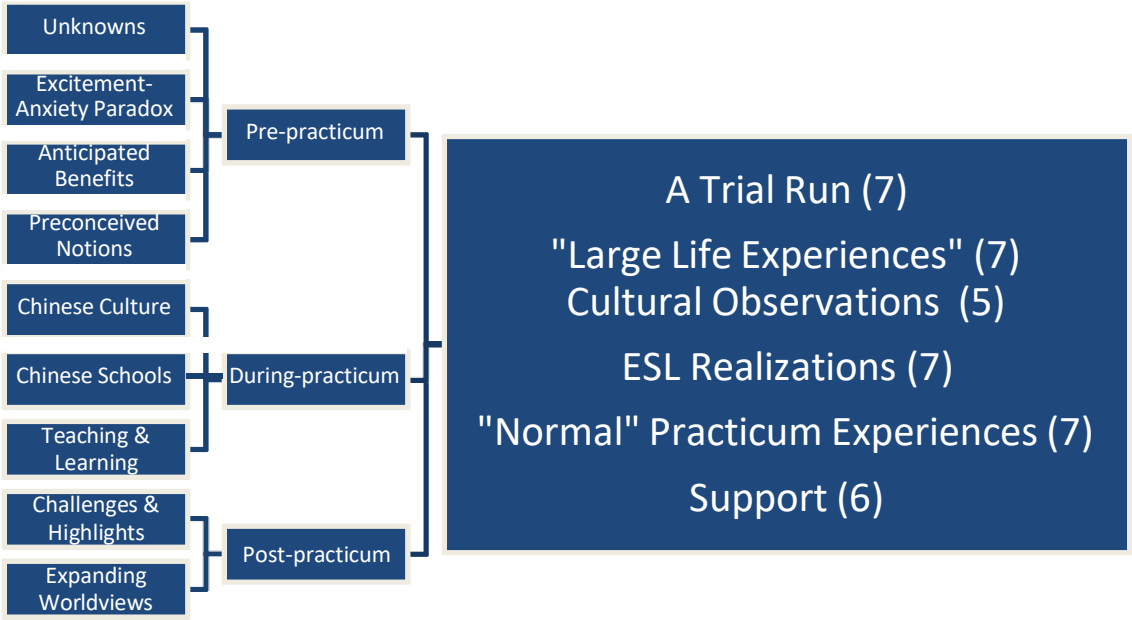

Figure 1. Emergent themes. Numbers next to the overarching themes indicate the number of participants, out of seven, who brought out the theme at all three phases of data collection.

Each of the overarching themes will be discussed in terms of the overall data and will then be illuminated through data collected at all three stages of the practicum from a particular participant. By exploring and interpreting the data in this way, we hope to give readers not simply an anonymous glimpse of the data, but an individualized and personalized reflective account of the experience, and the professional and personal growth.

A Trial Run

Six of the seven participants described this practicum experience as a way to determine if an international teaching job was something they would pursue. Teacher candidates viewed the

experience as a two-month "trial run" and as a chance to "get out of their comfort zone". Beth's data showed a journey through this concept of trial run and test:

> I haven't been to Asia yet so I'll get a better idea of what it's all about there. And I've always been interested in teaching abroad. So I think having two months away and experiencing having a classroom and doing a lot of the teaching…will give me a really good idea if it's something that I do want to do in the future…I've been really excited it's been mentioned a lot that this could turn into a job offer to go back next year. […] So, I think it can only enhance our CV. In the end just learning more about yourself, what you're capable of doing you know. The risk you're willing to take. I think that's really important as well. (Beth, pre-practicum focus group)
>
> These past 2 months have really allowed me to get into the swing of things. In the beginning I was nervous about coming into a Grade 4 class. I was unsure about how it was all going to pan out (teaching ESL students in China in the heat!). But now, I feel comfortable and much more at ease! This has been such an eye-opening experience and one that I would promote to all B.Ed. students. (Beth, during-practicum journal, April 27)

> … I'm really excited that I came away knowing that teaching abroad is something that I'm going to do and want to do because it's always kind of been the plan, taking the opportunities to go and teach. (Beth, post-practicum focus group)

The next theme, "Large Life Experiences", words taken directly from those of one participant, speak to the sentiment that this opportunity was one that contributed to both personal and professional growth.

"Large Life Experiences"

All seven participants either directly or indirectly shared their belief that this international practicum was a life experience that was significant and meaningful. Most of the data that related to this theme were shared in the post-practicum focus group or the reflective paper. Teacher candidates spoke about how the experience changed some of their preconceived notions of China and how it expanded their horizons, both inside and outside of the classroom. Participants did not only talk about the large life experiences in this glowing and positive way. They also commented on the life lessons that were either reinforced or brought to the fore as a result of this challenging experience. Resilience was evident in some of the teacher candidates' experiences. Others also expressed that challenging situations with which they were presented were springboards for learning—both about teaching and about themselves. Flexibility was seen as a disposition needed for any environment a person may find themselves in—home or abroad.

It is Cathy's data that will be the focal narrative for this theme and it is Cathy who coined the term. In her case, the "large life experience" theme was a thread that ran through all three sets of data.

> I'm looking forward besides the teaching aspect as a *large life experience* [emphasis added]…As [name of another participant] said, it's the best opportunity that you could get for yourself. It will look good but just to find out who you are as a person and your adaptability and your flexibility and all those things are important I think as well. (Cathy, pre-practicum focus group)
>
> It is funny because the website depicting the school is a little dated. Everything is still functional, but quite not what I expected. I really thought of China as a 21st century, ahead of the game place that would teach me about technology and such. Was I wrong! We are

> lucky when we have the internet, and when it is available it is quite dodgy. We make do, however! (Cathy, during-practicum journal, March 27)
>
> …yeah the culture, I definitely appreciate them [Chinese people] and appreciate the Chinese people in Canada too. You learn to understand some of the differences and you understand now where they're coming from. So, I definitely want to go over and to see if they [Chinese students in Canada] need any help with anything. (Cathy, post-practicum focus group)

Although the influences on the participants were varied, it was clear from the data that each participant felt the international practicum did have some sort of impact on them personally. It was a life experience that taught them about the kinds of characteristics that they realized they possess or need to possess. The role played by the cultural component of the experience, alluded to in Cathy's final quotation, is elaborated in the next theme.

Cultural Observations

Perhaps one of the least surprising themes that emerged from the data was that of cultural observations. Participants made comments in focus groups and entries in their journals that took the form of recounts of culturally-related incidents, cross-cultural questions, or reflections on cultural elements of their experience. Although there were data that were exclusive to general observations about life in China and Chinese people, for the present study, we focused on those related to the educational environment. In particular, all of the participants recounted stories that related to the learners with whom they were working. In general, teacher candidates viewed the relationships with their students as positive, and felt appreciated by their Chinese students. In addition to the general positive culturally-connected commentary related to their Chinese

students, participants also recounted some challenges they encountered that they sometimes attributed to the Chinese culture. For example, one intern acknowledged the universality of bullying, but, at the same time, was troubled by some of the behaviours she witnessed that she perceived may be particular to Chinese students (e.g., a more aggressive academic culture, insults, and the "sneakiness" of being able to bully in Mandarin—a language not understood by the teacher). Comments related to cell phone use and sleeping were particularly common and found in all of the during-practicum journals of those working with high school-aged students. One of the other issues that many of the participants raised was that of the perceived academic "pressure" faced by Chinese students.

Although there were a few culturally-oriented comments related to Chinese teachers and Chinese schools (e.g., stricter disciplinary behaviours, test-focused teaching practices), the overwhelming majority of school-based cultural commentaries related to students. As Frances' pre-, during- and post- practicum reflections demonstrate, this theme was sometimes threaded through the three phases of data:

> The thing I'm most nervous about is the culture because I've never been to China before and I know that the schools there and the students there are a lot different than our students here. (Frances, pre-practicum focus group)

> The classes are similar to ours at home but the students seem very eager to learn, especially about us. They seem to seek our approval and are interested in our lives. They are well behaved in class and most chatter is just them trying to figure out what was said or what they should be doing. (Frances, during-practicum journal, March 25)

> Now we know what it's like to be in a country that doesn't speak our language….And so now I understand what it would be like to come to Canada and have little to no English, it would be like just so scary. At least we had each other and we were just like "oh we're here for two months this is kind of funny" but it wouldn't be funny if we were moving there forever and had nobody and you're there with your family, it would be really hard. (Frances, post-practicum focus group)

Frances' cultural observations were not simply a matter of stating what she saw and heard while living in China, but also show movement toward cross-cultural reflection. All seven participants in this study, at some point in the data collection process, wrote or shared comments of this nature. Related in many ways to these insights gained by cultural observations were the realizations about teaching ESL that emerged from the data. Participants, all of whom had taken one course in ESL[2], but only one of whom had previous ESL experience, remarked on the challenges and rewards of English language teaching in this Chinese learning environment.

ESL Realizations

All seven participants spoke at length about the ESL component of their work in China. These professional experiences, although perhaps not unique to China, were different from those they would have experienced in local Canadian schools. Many participants had only a little background in ESL teaching and in their pre-practicum interview and, particularly, in their journals, they conveyed some anxiety about this fact. Language learners with particularly low

[2] Participants in this study were enrolled in an introductory ESL methods course, part of the CTESL prior to going to China. This course dealt with theoretical aspects of language learning as well as some modern approaches to teaching ESL.

levels of English were of special concern to many participants in this study, while some other participants referred to the challenges of teaching multilevel classes.

Irene's reflections show her journey from her prior practicum experiences in an elementary school in Canada to her high school ESL teaching in China. In particular, in her final post-practicum reflections, she makes connections between these two experiences and the value that she placed on the Chinese practicum.

> I have been working on reading with my grade 10 students and have noticed that the *th* sound is very difficult for them to make. I have reverted to a strategy that I observed in a kindergarten class… make the *th* sound by touching your finger with your tongue. (Irene, during-practicum journal, March 31)
>
> The higher ranked classes are extremely motivated... I find this similar to an elementary classroom at home because they are demanding of your time. It is easy to give my time to them when they are so appreciative of it. I have also realized that because their English levels are higher they are able to understand humour ... The other two classes … I enjoy just as much, but for different reasons. For me, the lower classes are much more challenging and require me to bring in some classroom management strategies. (Irene, during-practicum journal, April 12)
>
> I think I took away a new respect for language learners. I think you learn a lot about their frustrations... (Irene, post-practicum focus group)

> I was able to learn so much about teaching English… Coming into the high school practicum after taking several elementary education classes was very beneficial. I found that I could use the same strategies teaching reading to elementary students as I could for

> high school ESL students…I am so happy I took this opportunity to go to China, had I not I don't think I would have found out how rewarding and how much I enjoyed teaching English as an additional language! (Irene, final reflection)

Although all of the participants reflected on challenges related to the teaching of ESL, all of them concluded that this was one of the most professionally beneficial aspects of the international practicum. Nonetheless, practica of any kind are fraught with obstacles to overcome and problems to be solved. For these participants, some of their reflections could have stemmed from a practicum in Canada and it is these sorts of data that are the focus of the next section.

"Normal" Practicum Experiences

Although participants in this study were experiencing a practicum in a country that was very different from their own, they shared comments that one might expect to hear/read from any intern who is navigating the work of becoming teacher. All seven participants made numerous comments of this kind, mostly in the during-practicum journal when the teaching experience was front and center. From classroom management issues to instructional mishaps, these participants covered the gamut in terms of the practicum experience.

Although most of these typical practicum comments were made in the during-practicum journal, for a couple of participants, like Abby, the practicum was the main focus throughout all phases of the journal. Despite the occasional cultural commentary related to experiences outside the classroom, the majority of her data could have been part of a Canadian practicum.

> I think the biggest thing that I'm thinking about right now is what grade I'm going to be placed in…so I can get some resources, get my mind wrapped around a grade and get a little bit prepared. (Abby, pre-practicum focus group)

> One of the biggest obstacles I think I have had with my teaching here so far is the fact that I just started teaching everything, and its hard to try and start something and not see the end to it…its hard to just walk away from something that is not finished. (Abby, during-practicum journal, April 24)
>
> Reflecting back on my practicum, I am extremely happy and satisfied as to how it went. I could not have asked for a better group of students to teach, a better cooperating teacher to work under, and a better situation to be in. I love looking back on the experiences I have had in my life where I have learned much about myself as a person, and this experience was definitely one of them. (Abby, final reflection)

Although these teacher candidates were immersed in a culture very different from their own, they did not only see differences, but perceived many "universals" when it comes to the work of becoming teacher. Learning to navigate the complex nature of classrooms, whether in China or in Canada, is a challenging task and one that is made more meaningful and positive if support and mentorship are available—a final theme to emerge from the data.

Support

Six of the seven participants discussed some aspect of support and/or mentorship that they felt contributed to their ability to adapt to their new school environment and to their ability to succeed in the international practicum. In the pre-practicum focus group, some of the participants expressed that having a good mentor was an expectation for the international practicum. Some had this hope but also expressed concern about leaving their Canadian mentor teacher behind. During the international practicum, participants had varying experiences related to mentorship and support. Some reported how pleased they were with the collegiality of the

young staff while others focused on their positive relationship with their particular mentor. However, the relationship with an individual mentor teacher had more of an impact on the participants' professional growth.

Jackie's journey highlights the importance of a mentor in becoming a competent and knowledgeable teacher.

> The school I'm at now I know there is like a lot of experienced teachers there. I have like a mentor and I have like role models. And that's something I am a little concerned about in China because I know a lot of the teachers are newer teachers. (Jackie, pre-practicum focus group)
>
> Many of them [the teachers] are new to the profession and are still learning. I am lucky to have [name of cooperating teacher] because he has a fair amount of experience compared to the other teachers and he is slowly helping me out with planning and easing me into lessons. (Jackie, during-practicum journal, March 28)
>
> My cooperating teacher even had to assist me with my powerpoint because it had a few errors. It brought me back down to earth because even though English is my first language, I need to sharpen up on those skills if I want to teach it in the future. (Jackie, during-practicum journal. April 16)
>
> His [my cooperating teacher's] goal was to prepare the students for the inevitability of going overseas and being able to manage essays, grammar, and references within a paper... I learned that if I am ever to teach grammar or writing that I will have to do some serious studying and refreshing! I think that is a huge part of being a teacher… things change, we need to stay current and keep up to date. (Jackie, final reflection)

Although solid mentorship is a necessary component of all successful practicum experiences, being in an international and ESL teaching context made the need for support even more crucial. For these participants, support came in the form of mentor teachers and fellow colleagues. From these data, it appeared that the latter contributed more to personal wellness, whereas the former to professional development. Both support systems were mentioned as having an impact on participants in this study.

Discussion

These data revealed that the overall experience of the participants was a positive one, a result that is reflected in other studies of international practica (e.g., Cushner & Mahon, 2002; Marx & Moss, 2011; Maynes et al., 2012; Riches & Benson, 2011; Willard-Holt, 2001). Although fraught with pedagogical and personal challenges, participants, even during the experience, were able to work through their problems and frustrations and see the possible personal or professional growth potential. Although situated in a Chinese educational context, these data showed that teacher candidates were experiencing many of the "normal" issues that one would encounter in any classroom—building learner relationships, dealing with classroom management issues, the importance of teacher mentors, and preparing effective lessons and assessments. This finding, far from surprising, may be due to the open-ended nature of the focus groups and reflection journals used in this study, which allowed participants to comment freely on any topic or matter that was significant to them at the time of speaking or writing. There was little direction to lead participants to speak or write about specific elements of the Chinese practicum. Although this study was not primarily phenomenological in its research design, data collected revealed experiences as lived and perceived by the participants (e.g., van Manen, 1997).

Some of the comments shared by many participants in their during-practicum journals were simply reflecting the reality of the experiences they were living and observing. Using Collier's (1999) categories of reflection, it seems that participants were often reflecting at a very technical level as they tried to navigate the day-to-day issues of learning how to teach in a classroom setting. However, although many of the participants' observations stayed in the realm of technical and practical typologies, critical reflection was also present in data from during-practicum journals, post-practicum focus group interviews, and reflection pieces. We feel these more critical reflections found in the data were linked more directly to the context in which this practicum took place.

Themes of cultural observations, ESL realizations, and, to some extent, "large life experiences" offered the most in terms of reflection at the critical level. Similar to the Maynes et al. study, which was set in an African developing country, data suggest that teacher candidates were beginning to make "shifts in their worldviews toward more inclusive, compassionate, interdependent, and respectful understanding of another culture" (p. 86). In the present study, focus groups certainly contributed to creating reflective and meaningful peer dialogue and quotations from these sessions were often more critical in nature. However, the individual journaling also revealed some reflection of this sort (perhaps because many participants saw this journal as a way to communicate with the researchers who were known to them) and sometimes included the most poignant narratives revealing elements of empathy, compassion, self-awareness, as well as the beginnings of cross-cultural understanding. The Riches and Benson (2011) study, which was set in a cultural environment that is the most similar to the present study and also used a similar data collection methods, also included narratives of this nature. In other studies situated in varying contexts (e.g., Marx & Moss, 2011, Ozek, 2009; Pence &

Macgillivray, 2008; Willard-Holt, 2001) we see conclusions which confirmed those of Willard-Holt (2001), highlighting personal and professional benefits "such as increased confidence, a better appreciation and respect for differences of others and other cultures, and an awareness of the importance that feedback and reflection play in professional and personal growth" (p. 23). In this way, the present study echoed others of its kind and we can conclude that this experience gave these participants a chance to not only engage in the business of becoming teacher, but also gave them understandings and insights related to personal attributes such as caring and empathy. At the same time, it allowed them to think about their experience in terms of their professional journey. In many cases, the lines between personal and professional were blurred as themes related to cultural and linguistic topics could be viewed as both personally and professionally relevant. Grisham, Laguardia, and Brink (2000) underscored the pivotal role of mentor teachers in teacher candidate development. This study not only echoed this finding, but also those of Marx and Moss (2011), showing the importance of a mentor, or guide, in facilitating intercultural understanding in an international practicum.

Finally, we were struck by a conclusion in Marx and Moss (2011) stating:

> Teacher education study abroad programs should not try to alleviate students' experience of culture shock; rather, they need to leverage the intercultural challenges inherent in these experiences and provide support for students as they struggle to make sense out of what they are experiencing. (p. 43)

Culture shock was definitely experienced by participants in this study, even if at times they did not recognize it or had the resilience and self-confidence to work through it. A number of participants in this study commented on how they felt it was beneficial to have overcome the challenges they faced, and that this perseverance was a valuable experience both personally and

in terms of equipping them to face the unknowns and the challenges of teaching. However, providing forums for discussion and critical reflection as well as ensuring appropriate support are factors that can allow teacher candidates to work through, and make meaning of, these new experiences.

Implications and Conclusion

The results of this research point towards implications for those coordinating international practica as well as for those undertaking future research in this field. With regard to the coordination of international practica for teacher candidates, our data suggest that there is a need for good teacher candidate-mentor matches. For example, participants in this study greatly valued the relationships they formed with their cooperating teachers and the experience the latter was able to share. Moreover, a supportive culture amongst school staff was seen as a positive part of teacher candidates' experience and a key factor in their ability to persevere and overcome challenges. In addition, those coordinating international practica must be aware of the need to articulate the goals of these field experiences for teacher candidates and help them achieve these goals. As is suggested in this research study and others, the importance of reflection cannot be overestimated. We suggest that critical reflection must be built in to the international practicum experience in an organic and meaningful way, in order for teacher candidates to fully appreciate their learnings and growth.

In that vein, with regard to future research, we believe that this need for reflection will be key to furthering our understanding of teacher candidates' personal and professional growth during international practica. In-depth, reflective examination of this growth will enable participants and researchers to more fully understand the potential of these types of experiences.

Reflection taking the form of a more dialogic journaling process or an online discussion forum could contribute to collaborative knowledge construction that touches not only upon the practicalities of the practicum but also upon the deeper meanings embedded within the experience. Furthermore, we feel that our own research could be furthered by comparing the findings from this study with data collected during future iterations of this same international practicum program. Finally, as we analyzed parts of our data we noted that some of the themes seemed to relate to a practicum experience in general, and perhaps not strictly an international one. This could be further investigated by comparing data from international practica with data from Canadian practica. This comparison may help deepen our understanding of what experiences might be unique to these international field experiences and thus might further clarify their value in the journey to becoming teacher.

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Appendix A

The pre-practicum focus group questions were:

1. What are your expectations for your practicum in China?
2. What are you thinking about at this point in time?

The during-practicum journal prompts were:

1. Describe your teaching experiences.
2. Describe your cultural experiences.
3. Describe your learning experiences.

The post-practicum focus group questions were:

1. What did you take away from your practicum in China?
2. What did you learn from your practicum in China?
3. What will stay with you related to your practicum in China?

Place-based Teacher Development:

Placing Practicum Learning at the Heart of Pre-service Teacher Education

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Abstract

We begin by addressing the long-standing issue of a theory-practice gap in teacher education programs. In exploring this issue, we conclude that the practicum should play a larger and more central role in teacher education programs—early, extensive, and interspersed—due to its importance in the development of teacher candidates. In addition, we suggest the equally important need for a particular kind of pedagogy, responsive to candidates' teaching experiences, to be used by teacher educators. The goal of such a problem-based and place-based pedagogy is to help foster transformative learning on the part of candidates so that they might transcend the typical limitations of their development as teachers in teacher education programs.

The Problem

When considered in terms of their impact on teacher candidates' development of knowledge of how to teach, teacher education programs could be viewed as ineffective. Many teacher candidates seem to be unable to use the theory-driven guidelines offered to them in their courses when they subsequently engage in their practicum placements (Grisham, Laguardia, & Brink, 2000). Lortie (1975) has pointed out that, unlike most other professions, the work of teachers is viewed and observed extensively by virtually everyone, as a result of being pupils in school for many years. For those people who eventually become teacher candidates, those years in school serve as a long "apprenticeship of observation" (p. 61) that serves as a base for developing extensive personal and tacit theories about the work of teachers; theories that become well established over time and are taken as active working models into their teacher education programs. During practicum placements, while teacher candidates may find it difficult to enact their pre-existing theories from the perspective and stance of a teacher rather than a pupil, much of their learning seems to remain rooted within the same perspective of teaching and learning that they were exposed to as pupils (Gomez, Walker, & Page, 2000).

The evidence of these limitations to candidates' development in practicum experiences is longstanding (Zeichner & Tabatchnik, 1981) and widespread (Clift & Brady, 2005; Wideen, Meyer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). The only exceptions to this general trend appear to be programs that can provide a high degree of coherence between the content of course work and the models provided by associate or cooperating teachers in their practice (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Clift and Brady's (2005) review of recent research on the extent to which teacher candidates actually implement in their student teaching the content of their on-campus methods courses reveals this challenging situation. They note that on-campus courses can influence students' thinking about

practice, "but implementing practice based on beliefs is neither linear nor simple" (p. 15). In fact, the research they reviewed provided considerable evidence of the difficulty of moving from intention to action for students (Gordon & Debus, 2002; Grisham, Laguardia, & Brink, 2000; Pryor & Kuhn, 2004). Students resisted adopting teaching practices recommended by their programs if they found them difficult to implement or if the practices contradicted their existing beliefs and practices, even when their student teaching situation modeled the recommended practices. It was easiest for students to adopt recommended practices in their teaching when their field experiences modeled those practices, as was often the case when teacher education programs were linked with Professional Development Schools, although in these situations some students continued to experience conflicting perspectives.

As further indication of how difficult it can be for teacher candidates to follow recommended guidelines for their teaching during the practicum, we offer several examples from our research projects. The following passage describes recent practicum experiences of elementary student teachers from McGill University. In response to Kristyn's difficulty in managing the behaviour of a defiant and oppositional boy in her grade 4 class during practicum, her associate teacher advised her to offer the boy some directed choices in order to meet his need for some sense of control. Kristyn, however, could not bring herself to follow this advice because she felt that it would erode her authority and power as a teacher, a strong belief that led her to make all decisions for students. In another case, Tania struggled to provide appropriate support for a special needs student in her grade 3 class. Her teacher advised scribing as support for the student during writing activities, because his literacy levels were quite low and he could write very little independently. Yet Tania resisted this advice because her belief was that she should not be doing the student's work for him.

Teacher candidates regularly rate practicum experiences as the most significant component of their teacher education programs (Bullock & Russell, 2010; Elliott, 1991; Segall, 2002; Veenman, 1984; Zeichner & Tabachnik, 1981). Nevertheless, the practicum often appears to be a marginal and relatively separate component of many traditional teacher education programs and an experience that only occurs after considerable program course work. Such programs are built on a conceptual framework that we view as theory-*into*-practice.

One of the most frequently discussed issues in teacher education seems to be the gap that appears to exist between theory and practice in teacher education programs (Wideen, Meyer-Smith & Moon, 1998; Rosean & Florio-Ruane, 2008). Clandinin (1995) refers to the "sacred story" in teacher education in which on-campus courses provide theoretical ideas about how to teach that could then be put into practice in the field experience under the supervision of a host professional. It seems to be widely acknowledged that there is a considerable gap between ideas that are taught in courses and the subsequent practices of teacher candidates. The call to close the gap between theory and practice has been highlighted in calls for teacher education reform (Allsop, DeMarie, Alvarez-McHatton & Doone, 2006; Bush, 1987; Cochran-Smith, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Jeffery & Polleck, 2010; Ritter, 2012).

We concur with those who have argued that the idea of theory-into-practice is based on the perspective that Schön (1983) labeled "technical rationality." Writing shortly before Schön's seminal work, Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981) provided two possible explanations for why teacher candidates seem to revert to traditional teaching methods during their practicum experiences. First, Zeichner and Tabachnick cite Lortie (1975) to develop the idea that "biography, as opposed to formal training or teaching experience, [is] the key element in teacher socialization" (p. 8). We tend to teach as we were taught; teacher education programs are faced

with a significant challenge if they fail recognize and address the effects of the apprenticeship of observation. Second, Zeichner and Tabachnick take an opposing view to suggest that university teacher education "is not a liberalizing influence, but one in quite the opposite direction" (p. 9). They suggest that teacher education may inadvertently support the existing structure of the school system.

Meanwhile, teacher candidates are shaped in their developing practice by their practicum experiences, with relatively little influence from their coursework and other program experiences. The quality of their learning depends to a large extent on the quality of the mentoring they receive from associate teachers and faculty supervisors. Darling-Hammond (2006) sees "the problem of enactment" as a framework for understanding the theory-practice gap:

> Learning how to think and act in ways that achieve one's intentions is difficult, particularly if knowledge is embedded in the practice itself Information about what ideas students have developed about a topic, how they understand or misunderstand the material being taught, and how each learns best emerges in the actual work of teaching (p. 37)

The challenge for teacher education programs continues to be one of fostering transformative (rather than reproductive) learning and practice among teacher candidates in order to help them move beyond these typical limitations in their development as teachers.

The Argument

We propose that practicum could and should play a larger and more central role in teacher education programs because of its importance in the professional development of teacher

candidates. Practicum experiences should be early, extensive, interspersed, and varied, thus enhancing the place of school within teacher education programs. What must accompany more extensive practicum experiences are multiple opportunities for teacher candidates to analyze and re-imagine practice, ideally with skillful help. Teacher educators need to employ a certain kind of pedagogy based centrally on candidates' teaching experience that includes a recognition of place. We refer to this approach as practice-*and*-theory. The intent of this approach is not to try to fill candidates up with ideas about research-based practices in education, but rather to encourage teacher candidates to make sense of professional experiences during both the practicum and on-campus coursework. The aim is to reduce the dissonance that often exists between the two sites of teacher education. With roots in experiential and place-based education, this approach reflects the principles of a reflective practicum proposed by Schön (1987). The implications of such an approach, according to Schön, are to reverse the traditional figure-ground of course work and practicum. The major implication of this shift for teacher education programs is to focus on the lived experiences of teacher candidates during both practicum and course work, with the aim of helping candidates describe, interpret, analyze, and evaluate their experiences. Such an approach is concerned with the contextual, geographical, political, and social conditions that shape people and the actions people take to shape those conditions.

A Conceptual Framework

Transformative Learning

Transformative learning, like reflective practice, is a term that means different things to different people. We use the term *transformative learning* as articulated by Mezirow (1995): "to redress an apparent oversight in adult learning theory that has resulted from a failure to recognize

the central roles played by an individual's frame of reference, through which meaning is construed and all learning takes place, and by the transformation of these habits of expectation during the learning process" (p. 4). Mezirow argues that it is possible to learn without having a transformative experience, particularly if learning simply reinforces our presuppositions. Argyris and Schön (1974) would call this *single-loop learning*. Mezirow (1991) argued that "transformative learning involves reflectively transforming the beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and emotional reactions that constitute our meaning schemes" (p. 268). Thus, we link Mezirow's concept of transformative learning with Argyris and Schön's (1974) concept of *double-loop learning* and Schön's (1983) articulation of *reframing* and *reflection-in-action*.

Ideally, the practicum should be an opportunity for teacher candidates to enact their professional knowledge of teaching by taking on the role of teacher in a supportive environment. However, teacher candidates often seem to struggle to change their frame of reference from student to teacher, given that the school setting is so familiar to them. Mezirow (1997) states "frames of reference are the structures of assumptions through which we understand our experiences" (p. 5). Teacher candidates are frequently attempting to relearn their frame of understanding of school to include the perspective of teacher, while also working to meet the expectations of cooperating teachers and university-based supervisors. In a recent study examining why new mathematics teachers did or did not implement what they were taught in their teacher education programs, Gainsbury (2012) found that teacher candidates reported that they did not know how to implement approaches that were explained in university classrooms and that learning theories were too distant when the time came to plan actual lessons for real students.

We recognize that there are major barriers to transformative learning. Argyris and Schön (1974) address how professionals become skilful in their practice by learning new theories of action and what prevents some professionals from learning to become skilful. They found that professionals' theories of action are manifested in two ways. *Theories-in-use* form the basis of professionals' practice, but are often tacit and implicit and thus not accessible to conscious awareness. In contrast, professionals also have *espoused theories* that indicate how they describe and justify their professional behaviour to themselves and others. In their work to help professionals become more effective in their practice by learning and using new theories of action, Argyris and Schön found that learners face several key hurdles to change.

- A lack of congruence between a learner's theory-in-use and his or her espoused theory; a lack of congruence that is often difficult for the learner to see.
- While learners may understand conceptually and even accept the new theories of action they encounter, they still retain the existing theories-in-use that guide their current practice.

Argyris and Schön explain this phenomenon by turning to Ashby's (1952) notion of *single-loop learning*. In order to protect their existing theories-in-use, learners may develop not new theories of action, but rather strategies and tactics for achieving their original objectives within their theoretical frameworks, thus reproducing and strengthening their original theory-in-use and not really changing very much at all. Thus their larger frame of reference remains unchanged, while any learning of new strategies on their part fits within old frames of reference. Tavris and Aronson (2008) suggest that the reason we are more likely to engage in single-loop learning is that it quickly reduces uncomfortable feelings of cognitive dissonance.

Transformative learning of new behaviour by professionals is explained in terms of Ashby's (1952) notion of *double-loop learning*. In this case, a learner's larger frame of reference, or theory of action, does change, leading her or him to develop new habits to support the new frame of reference. However, such learning of new and complex behaviour involves both unlearning and relearning and requires time and support. Learners often have unrealistic expectations that new learning will be quick and easy. Instead, they tend to be shocked at how quickly and easily they revert to their old theories-in-use and how hard it is to incorporate new theories of action.

Schön (1995) explains *reframing* in the context of reflection-in-action in the following terms:

> The process of reflection-in-action begins when a spontaneous performance such as riding a bicycle, playing a piece of music, interviewing a patient, or teaching a lesson is interrupted by surprise. Surprise triggers reflection directed both to the surprising outcome and to the knowing-in-action that led to it. It is as though the performer asked himself, "What is this?" and at the same time, "What understandings and strategies of mine have led me to produce this?" The performer restructures his understanding of the situation –his framing of the problem he has been trying to solve, his picture of what is going on, or the strategy of action he has been employing. On the basis of this restructuring, he invents a new strategy of action and tries out the new action he has invented, running an on-the-spot experiment whose results he interprets, in turn, as a "solution," an outcome on the whole satisfactory, or else as a new surprise that calls for a new round of reflection and experiment. This is the sort of thing a physician may do when encountering a patient whose particular configuration of symptoms is "not in the book." It

> is what a good teacher does as she tries to make sense of a pupil's puzzling question, seeking to discover, in the midst of a classroom discussion, just how that pupil understands the problem at hand. In the course of such a process, the performer "reflects" not only in the sense of thinking about the action he has undertaken and the result he has achieved, but in the more precise sense of turning thought back on the knowing-in-action implicit in action. The actor reflects "in action" in the sense that his thinking occurs in an action-present—a stretch of time within which it is still possible to make a difference to the outcomes of action. (p. 30)

Most of the teacher candidates with whom we have worked seem to enact one frame (theory-in-use) while espousing another (espoused theory). Often the frames of theories-in-use are implicit and subconscious, but the process of reframing can generate awareness. New teachers' challenge of enacting a new frame or an espoused frame is that they have not developed the skills and strategies to do so (Kennedy, 1999). Finally, the teacher education practicum tends not to be a good time for candidates to experiment with their practice because they feel constrained by the formal evaluation process.

Major transformation, or reframing, in the practice of a teacher seems to happen infrequently and can be hard to capture. We emphasize that we are speaking here about reflection-*in-action*, not the everyday sense of reflection as thinking a little more about an issue or experience. In another example taken from elementary student teachers from McGill University, Alice speaks about a major reframing that occurred during her teaching, although not quickly and not easily. She describes a shift from a frame in which she saw herself as making decisions for her students and then having them follow her directions to a frame of opening up the decision-making process to her students and then facilitating that process for them:

> I'd say that management is one thing where my perspective is somewhat changed. So, being a more democratic classroom. I remember when we had a discussion in one of our seminars about the different ways of including kids in the process, and I'd always thought about doing it, but you realize that you don't really know how it works. And I remember one time we were doing mappings and I said, "Why don't we make a map of our own classroom." So then they did, and they got to vote to pick the set-up they liked the best and then they changed everything in the room. So it's this idea of giving power to the kids, I'd say that's something that has changed a lot—through the discussions and through the thinking which happened again today! I said to the kids, "What do you think worked last Thursday and how do you think we could change it and can I get your attention because we're going to be together for this week, a hard and fast rule for this week, because I'm only going to be here this long, let's make a method that's going to work for us." And they were fully into it, voting on these different methods and all this kind of stuff.

It may be noteworthy that this shift came during her teaching in a special school-based project, rather than during an official practicum—and after she had completed almost all the practicum in her program. During this special project, she was not supervised and the teacher with whom she worked did not have to evaluate her.

Place-based Learning

When we propose putting practicum at the centre of teacher education programs, we thereby privilege the *place* of the school and the community, with all their particular characteristics and demands. *Place-based education* is an approach to learning that is grounded in the context of

community, both natural and social (Gruenewald, 2008; Raffan, 1995; Theobald & Curtiss, 2000). It emerges from the particular attributes of a place. The content is specific to the geography, ecology, sociology, politics, and other dynamics of that place (Woodhouse & Knapp, 2000). It provides:

- a purpose to the knowledge and reasoning taught in schools,
- a contextual framework for much of the curriculum (that is, it gives meaning to the studies) and engages the student teacher in the conditions of her/his own reality.

Similarly, *experiential education* is the process of "learning by doing", which begins with the learner engaging in direct "experience" followed by reflection (Dewey, 1915; Tyler, 1949). It is difficult for many teacher candidates to engage with larger theoretical issues and generalized educational truths without some understanding of how these topics connect to their personal experiences and to the school's local issues. In a place-based approach, the starting point is the specific and local, not the general and global. We must respond to what the world already means to a particular people, from a specific community, in a distinct locale (Carnie, 2003). Goulet (2001) states "that education needs to be viewed holistically, that what happens in school cannot be separated from the daily lives of teachers and students or the communities where it takes place" (p. 79).

A place-based approach to teacher education can be characterized as the integration of the teacher candidate into the practicum school to reinforce essential links between the teacher candidate and their place. Through this process, teacher candidates can make connections to their professional education that are based on realistic, immediate, and important features of their experience. We illustrate with an example from Debbie, a student teacher participating in a northern Aboriginal teacher education program:

> When you are thinking and acting in that deep way, when you are connected to the school, learning in a practical way, the retention of the material is tenfold…We got together in the seminar to discuss our day. With the assistance of [the teacher educator], we listened, talked, debated, and then through detailed observation… the objective is to come back and explain what you experienced and what you now think you know about it, based on what you have just seen. [These] are some of the most powerful teaching tools of this program.

A focus on place encourages the students to ask questions such as: Where am I? What is the nature of this place? and What sustains this school/community? Through a socio-constructivist approach that encourages both the teacher educators and mentor teachers to facilitate problem-posing pedagogies, the teacher candidate is charged with determining where she or he is situated within a place. This is most effective when performed within practicum sites through school-based seminars that include a cohort of teacher candidates with the facilitation and support of mentor teachers and teacher educators. This can lead to a process of re-storying in which teacher candidates investigate their past, present, and future professional development.

Structural Implications for Teacher Education Programs

Our primary focus in this section is on how teacher educators and practicum supervisors can be more effective in influencing the development of teacher candidates' professional practice, particularly with respect to theory-driven perspectives that make up much of the content of many traditional teacher education programs. Although we acknowledge the influential role of associate teachers on the development of teacher candidates during practicum experiences and the potential of teacher candidates' own experiential learning through practicum, we focus our

discussion on the structure of teacher education programs and the pedagogy used by teacher educators.

In terms of the structure and organization of teacher education programs, two components should be in place. First, if the teaching experience of candidates is to be the starting point for a transformative pedagogy by teacher educators, then practicum experiences should be central to and integrated within the program (e.g. in-school seminars concurrent with practicum experience). Practicum experiences need to be early, extensive and interspersed with courses. Early teaching experiences provide a learning base for concurrent or subsequent courses, extensive experiences provide time for unlearning and relearning, and interspersed experiences provide alternating periods of action and analysis. Second, teacher education programs should create opportunities during and immediately after practicum experiences for teacher candidates to step back from practice in order to analyze it and to consider future revisions to improve it, thereby making practical knowledge more explicit.

Darling-Hammond's (2006) analysis of seven exemplary American teacher education programs identified a number of key principles underlying each one. Two principles relevant to our argument are these:

- Extensive, connected clinical experiences: "Carefully chosen to support the ideas and practices presented in simultaneous, closely interwoven coursework" (p. 277).
- An inquiry approach: "Connects theory and practice, including regular use of case methods, analyses of teaching and learning, and teacher research, applying learning to real problems of practice and developing teachers as reflective practitioners" (p. 277).

The post-baccalaureate teacher education program at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands provides another illustration. Candidates experience integrated practicum and course work during

the entire eight-month program. During the fall semester, candidates spend 40% of their time in practicum, working in small groups to take on limited teaching responsibilities. During the winter semester, candidates individually take on approximately 60% of the teaching responsibilities (Korthagen, 2001). During both semesters, candidates engage in the kind of closely integrated course work and pedagogy identified by Darling-Hammond.

Pedagogical Implications for Teacher Education Programs

Even if such structural features are in place within teacher education programs, the pedagogical approaches used by teacher educators and practicum supervisors in their work with candidates are crucial. Simply continuing with a pedagogy of teacher education that does not acknowledge, explicitly and often, the multiple and complex ways teacher candidates change as a result of field experiences is unlikely to have a lasting impact on teacher candidates' developing practice (Loughran, 2006). Teacher education programs should develop professional learning strategies that can be used before, during, and after practicum experiences to help teacher candidates become aware of the frames within which they are working and to explore how working within an alternative frame might proceed. Professional learning strategies would work with teacher candidates' experiences in a variety of ways: to help them to develop awareness of their theories-in-use, to identify gaps between theories-in-use and espoused theories, to confront the powerful influence of their apprenticeship of observation, and to build emerging knowledge from their teaching experiences. In sum, the goal of these professional learning strategies is to make professional knowledge more explicit and to transform current practices into more effective ones.

The following sections, compiled from the practices of the various authors of this chapter, illustrate a range of professional learning strategies.

Confronting candidates' theories-in-use learned from their "Apprenticeship of Observation".

Russell & Bullock (2008) explored the potential of lesson study (Stepanek, Appel, Leong, Mangan, & Mitchell, 2007) early in a curriculum methods course to provide teacher candidates with an experience that would help them to discover the ideas about teaching that they developed in their apprenticeship of observation. By requiring teacher candidates to collaboratively plan a short science lesson and teach it to their peers in a methods course, the authors were able to find a way to focus on the pedagogical practices occurring in the methods classroom. They concluded: "Our early experiences with lesson study revealed how strongly teacher candidates are influenced by their apprenticeships of observation. Just as children in school have prior views about the content they are taught, so teacher candidates have prior views of how they should teach and how they will learn to teach. They had no choice but to teach lessons guided by perceptions of teaching acquired over many years as students" (p. 49).

Helping candidates turn experience into knowledge and explore responses to teaching challenges.

If teacher education programs are to help candidates make sense of their experiences and to re-imagine them, then candidates must be supported with an appropriate pedagogy. The use of a socio-constructivist approach, while still not typical in teacher education, has grown in practice and attention in recent decades (Beck & Kosnik, 2006; Richardson, 1997). According to Beck &

Kosnik (2006), such an approach is based on several key learning principles: knowledge is constructed by learners, knowledge is experience-based, learning is social, and all aspects of a person are connected:

> A socio-constructivist approach encourages all members of a learning community to present their ideas strongly, while remaining open to the ideas of others. It is a passionate approach, involving the whole person: thought, emotion, and action. It is not a relativistic outlook, where any position will do. (pp. 9-14)

Like Nuthall (2002), we think teacher input has a major role within a social constructivist framework. However, we also stress that students, too, must have a major role, with greater opportunity than they commonly have to give input, discuss, and reflect in class. (p. 8)

Thus topics for class work are based to a large extent on the needs, questions, and challenges that candidates face in their teaching. These can be identified by listening in class to their concerns, questions, and issues. Similarly, explorations of these topics and issues are based on key questions or problems embedded in the issues. Multiple opportunities should be provided for collaborative inquiry into professional knowledge, understanding, and practice.

Exposing gaps between candidates' theories-in-use and espoused theories.

Because candidates' theories-in-use tend to be tacit, they usually become apparent only during practicum teaching experiences. On the other hand, their espoused theories are more relevant to the topics discussed in lectures or seminars. One way of exposing a lack of congruence for candidates is for the roles of course/seminar leader and practicum supervisor to overlap. If this is not possible, then the efforts of teacher educator and supervisor need to be

coordinated. The following field notes by Dillon illustrate how identifying incongruence can lead to reframing of practice.

> Using a math workbook sheet of problems as the base for her lesson this morning, Alex was operating within a frame of making all decisions for her students about steps in the lesson, particular activities, how many problems to do, explaining, correcting, and so on—and of leading those steps herself as the teacher. As a result, although she managed it well, the lesson was fairly lifeless and lacked engagement on the part of the students. In our discussion afterward, I sought to prompt her to analyze her approach to the lesson and to explore other more effective ways to approach it. She was stumped and simply answered that, while the lesson was fairly boring, a teacher has to do these kinds of lessons at times in school. I reminded her of our earlier discussion in seminar about ways to engage students more in their learning, especially by sharing some of the teacher's traditional roles with learners; for example, students could work in small groups to solve the problems and explain their solutions to the class, they could devise some of the problems themselves and even test other small groups of learners in the class, and so on. A light went on for Alex as if she were encountering this principle for the first time, despite having written about it several weeks prior, and she excitedly began to see how she could apply this principle in many of her other lessons. She also commented on how helpful this input was because of its far-reaching implications, that is, that it was a reframing of her perspective.

It is also possible to provide candidates with tasks that may allow them to discover lack of congruence for themselves. A common approach to the development of a professional teaching portfolio structured around professional competencies involves asking candidates to

articulate the principles that they use for that competency while also capturing artifacts from their practice to illustrate those principles in action. Many candidates write an espoused theory for their written statement, and then discover that the artifacts which they capture from their practice reflect a different theory-in-use. The following comments from a teacher candidate illustrate the transformative effect of this approach to portfolio development (Dillon, 2014).

> Whereas before it was, like, "I would like my class to be like this by doing this, this, and this." There were no artifacts, and that's what I really liked, the aspect of artifacts, like this is what you are going to do. Yes, in my first portfolio, I'd say "This is how I want my classroom to be. How? Oh, . . ?" But in your method, you'd say "Well, how are you going to do it? Show me proof." And then I was thinking "Oh, no, how am I actually going to do this and how I had to do trial-and-error and try things and what worked I kept artifacts of and even what didn't work I'd keep artifacts of, just to show me what areas I could work on or which ones never to try again. So the artifacts, from the perspective of the portfolio, really made a difference. I never understood that we need to show HOW we can do it. Before it was only the ideal of what I want, but not the steps of how to achieve it. (pp. 62-63)

Using approaches to supervision that go beyond mere evaluative feedback.

Although teacher educators who are responsible for field supervision may initially be perceived by candidates as expert teachers who should provide a laundry list of ways to improve individual lessons during post-observation discussions, we believe that teacher educators should employ the same kinds of socio-constructivist approaches in the field as they do when teaching

education courses. Thus, the supervision of individual candidates during practicum might move beyond formal evaluation. The following field notes from Dillon illustrate such an approach:

> Kelly's math lesson this morning was deadly, a rote correction of problems on a worksheet. The students were not troublesome, simply bored and unengaged. As we started the debriefing session after the lesson, Kelly apologized for the "ordinary" lesson, excusing it by saying that that was how you often had to do math. I hesitated since any assessment of her lesson on my part would seem harsh. Before observing her lesson, however, I had had time to ask her about her teaching in general, the kinds of activities she was doing, what she was most proud of, and so on. She had gone on excitedly about an integrated unit on ancient Egypt, describing the activities and showing me the students' work that was still on display in the classroom. It certainly sounded like a highly successful and effective activity. I asked her what strategies she had followed that contributed to the positive outcome. She provided an excellent analysis: choice of activities for the students, surveying them about topics of interest (mummies were at the top of the list!), working cooperatively in small groups, showing their learning in concrete ways (e.g., dioramas), and not all students working on the same content so that they were all interested in what their classmates had learned. I then asked her if she saw any ways to use some of those same strategies in the math lesson she had just done. It took her a moment to consider the question, but she soon began very excitedly to articulate ways that she could revise the lesson to incorporate some of the same strategies from the ancient Egypt unit. Since she had constructed so much of her own new knowledge in answering my question, I did not feel that I had to offer any feedback or information. I'm

not sure how successful she will be in changing her practice in math education, but she certainly had a new sense of direction.

Explicitly modeling desired practices in our own teaching and supervision.

Lunenberg, Korthagen, and Swennen (2007) have explained the important role that teacher educators play in modeling pedagogy by highlighting the difference between *implicit* and *explicit* modeling. Implicit modeling is grounded in the assumption that teacher candidates can easily and readily pick up on the features of their teacher educator's pedagogy. In contrast, explicit modeling relies on teacher educators' ability to "think aloud" about their reasons for making particular pedagogical choices in the moment. Lunenberg et al. also point out that "teacher educators should try to help students to see how the teaching modeled can be applied to different teaching situations" (p. 591).

Conclusion

We began this chapter with the premise that teacher education programs are often considered to be ineffective when teacher candidates are unable to enact innovative teaching practices in both practicum settings and in the early years of teaching. We argued that the familiar gap between theory and practice arises in part from the fact that teacher education programs tend to be organized on the basis of a theory-into-practice model grounded in the principles of technical rationality. Our thesis is that teacher education programs should adopt a *practice-and-theory* perspective, whereby a central focus of a teacher education program should be the actual, lived experiences of teacher candidates in education classes and during practicum placements.

These ideas are developed using *transformative learning* and *place-based learning*, with particular emphasis on the importance of Schön's concepts of reframing and double-loop learning. We also considered the difficulty that new teachers have in developing transformative views of teaching and learning, given the constraints arising from their lengthy apprenticeships of observation. Incongruence between candidates' espoused theories and theories-in-use can provide a locus for developing a pedagogy of teacher education that emphasizes social constructivist approaches during both coursework and practicum placements. In acknowledging the tile of this book: *Becoming teacher: Sites for teacher development*, we believe place-based approaches to education remind us that specific, local factors can be crucial starting points and important conceptual *sites* for candidates to begin to understand the assumptions underlying their actions. This kind of understanding is a prerequisite for reframing and double-loop learning.

Our title, *Place-based Teacher Development: Placing Practicum Learning at the Heart of Pre-service Teacher Education*, might initially suggest that we are arguing for more practicum at the expense of coursework in a practice-based teacher education program. We emphasize that candidates' practicum experiences should be catalysts for identifying and challenging prior knowledge of and beliefs about teaching and learning. Teacher educators' professional learning strategies should acknowledge that teacher candidates can *change* as a result of experiences in practicum. If practicum learning is at the heart of teacher education, then how we interact with candidates during coursework and practicum placements should model responsive teaching and learning.

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Partnering for Practice:

An Investigation of Collaborative Inquiry as a Site for Teacher Education

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Abstract

Theories of teaching, learning to teach and theories of effective professional learning inform our investigation into the efficacy of co-learning through collaborative inquiry where the collaborative inquiry is undertaken by interns and cooperating teachers. Specifically, our study addresses the question: Does collaborative inquiry enhance professional learning for both pre-service & in-service teachers? We investigated the professional learning experiences of the members of a graduate level course (who are also cooperating teachers) and their interns. The course aimed to assist the graduate student/in-service teachers in developing understandings of the theories of effective professional learning and collaborative inquiry and course assignments required the in-service teachers to work collaboratively with their interns to conduct an inquiry into a question of mutual concern regarding professional practice. By gathering data from both the in-service and pre-service teachers regarding their co-learning experiences, our findings provide insights into the places and spaces where teacher education happens.

Introduction

Internships, or practicum placements, could be considered a meaningful and important site for both pre-service and in-service teacher education if these field study experiences were to be viewed by all parties as an opportunity for professional growth within a supportive environment rather than as a survival test for pre-service teachers. In the model we propose, pre-service teachers and in-service teachers learn together throughout the practicum by engaging in collaborative inquiries into theory and practice and by discussing and reflecting upon their daily experiences as a part of the investigation into teaching that practitioners do on a daily basis. In this approach, learning about teaching is not a one-way street where the pre-service teacher's learning and growth is judged by a cooperating in-service teacher, but rather it includes the notion that teacher education happens when both parties learn and grow.

Our thinking about where teacher education could happen has been shaped by investigations that have provided important insights. Out of a research study that spanned more than fifteen years, Ralph and Noonan (2004) concluded that while pre-service teachers were demonstrating competence in their instructional skills, "live classroom interaction" needed attention. Further, they observed that pre-service teachers needed to be "convinced of the relevance/benefits of these instructional skills for their own teaching success and the learning and interest of their pupils" (p. 14). Likewise, as noted in another Canadian research study conducted by Foster, Nishimoto and Haig-Brown (2007), the quality of the pre-service teachers' "relationships with their host teacher" (p. 14) as well as "trust, mutual respect, and the opportunity for dialogue between host teacher and the teacher candidate surrounding on-going and authentic assessment" (p. 14) were of particular importance to the success of a teacher education program.

The 'site' or model of teacher education we are investigating involves in-service teachers (mentors) and pre-service teachers (interns) in professional learning through collaborative inquiries of their own design. Our investigation addresses the sub-question: Does collaborative inquiry enhance professional learning for both pre-service and in-service teachers? We propose that studying the efficacy of co-learning through collaborative inquiry where the collaborative inquiry is undertaken by interns and cooperating teachers provides important insights into the physical and conceptual spaces where teacher education transpires.

Theoretical Framework

There is a growing body of literature theorizing 'teaching of teaching', or learning to teach, and theorizing effective professional co-learning through collaborative inquiry (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lave, 1996; Wenger, 1998; Wells, 1999; Brockbank & McGill, 2006; Jaworski, 2006; Howe, 2008; Boud, 2010; Burley & Pomphrey, 2011). These theoretical perspectives frame our thinking about teacher education and have influenced our approach to our inquiry and data analysis.

A Theory of Professional Learning

In considering the processes and procedures of professional learning, dialogue is perceived as a key ingredient (Burley & Pomphrey, 2011; Brockbank & McGill, 2006). Through dialogue, individuals engage in the challenge of knowledge negotiation which involves questioning personal knowledge, beliefs and assumptions, viewing situations from the perspective of others and the examination of alternative perspectives. In addition, powerful, professional learning requires criticality or critical reflection; that is, "a willingness to wonder, to

ask questions, and to seek understanding by collaborating with others in the attempt to make answers to them" (Wells, 1999, p. 121). While reflective practice has traditionally focused on individual learning through individual rumination, it is argued (Boud, 2010) that critical reflection is more likely to occur within a collaborative or team-based learning situation where group members take an inquiry stance in questioning actions, knowledge and beliefs. Through co-constructed critical reflection and dialogue, transformative practice is co-produced.

Powerful professional learning brings together a range of different perspectives through critical reflection and dialogue. It is a process involving practitioners in the exploration and questioning of both academic (disciplinary knowledge) and situated (pedagogical) knowledge, which leads to the co-production of meaningful mutual understandings that supports the creation of new "mediated" knowledge (Burley & Pomphrey, 2011).

Teaching of Teaching Theory - Teaching as Learning in Practice

Theories of professional learning meld well with theories of 'teaching of teaching' – in particular, with the theory of 'teaching as learning in practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lave, 1996; Jaworski, 2006). Learning in practice, within a 'community of practice', occurs when novices are drawn into practice by working alongside experienced teachers to perfect teaching processes and skills. Wenger (1998) conceptualizes learning as developing identity through participation in a community of practice where novices take on the characteristics of the members of the community – i.e., novices 'align' with the practice of the rest of the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lave, 1996).

While simple alignment can lack a critical dimension and lead to a status quo perpetuation of practice, critical alignment involves teachers in critiquing and improving upon

the status quo. Critical alignment involves 'teaching as learning in practice' in a mode of critical inquiry where the normal desirable state of being is one of co-learning inquiry, which includes meta-knowing or meta-cognitive awareness (Jaworski, 2006). Critical alignment takes place best in a '**c**ommunity of inquiry'; that is, in a community of teachers where inquiry has become one of the social norms in their practice. "In a community of inquiry, the novice practitioner is drawn into the community through processes of observation, action, questioning of actions, and inquiry into actions." (Jaworski, 2006, p. 201). Communities of inquiry also benefit veteran practitioners because such communities provide a context for reciprocal exchange of knowledge between experienced and intern teachers. Mentor teachers benefit from the inclusion of the intern teachers because experienced teachers learn a great deal from their interns (Howe, 2008).

In combination, the theory of professional learning and the theory of teaching as learning in practice conceptualize teacher education as a process that requires dialogue, co-constructed critical reflection, collaborative inquiry for co-learning and co-construction of transformative practices and new mediated knowledge. It is from this perspective that we study the efficacy of co-learning through collaborative inquiry where the collaborative inquiry is undertaken by interns and cooperating teachers.

Methodology and Data Sources

The opportunity to explore co-learning through inquiry with a specific group of in-service and pre-service teachers arose with the involvement of members of our team in offering a graduate level course designed specifically for cooperating (or mentor) teachers who volunteered to work with interns from our teacher education program during their sixteen week internship (extended practicum) in the fall of 2012. The purpose of the graduate level course was to

familiarize the practicing professionals with the theory and practice of mentoring, professional learning and critical collaborative inquiry in school based contexts. While the course aimed to assist the graduate student mentors in developing understandings of the theories of effective professional learning, mentoring, inquiry and co-learning, the primary course assignment required mentors to work in collaboration with their intern(s) to conduct a collaborative inquiry into questions about teaching and learning and professional practice.

We investigated the professional learning experiences of the members of this graduate level class and their interns by gathering data through focus group interviews. At the conclusion of the course, the twenty-five graduate student mentors and their twenty-five interns were invited to participate in separate focus group discussions around questions of professional learning. [See Appendix A for these questions.] Seven mentors and two interns consented to participate in the focus group conversations which were recorded and transcribed. To ensure comfort and confidentiality, the mentor focus group was facilitated by a member of our research team who was not directly involved in instruction of the graduate course and an individual who was not a member of the research team was hired to transcribe the recorded mentor and intern focus group discussions.

Our analysis of the transcribed data was aimed at unearthing patterns or themes that address the question of whether (or not) collaborative inquiry enhanced professional learning for both the pre-service and in-service teachers. Thematic analysis is embraced as a qualitative method in its own right (Joffe & Yardley, 2004; Braun & Clarke, 2006) and we used a deductive approach to thematic analysis taking into account our awareness of existing literature and theorizing. The qualitative data gathered from focus group transcripts was coded and sorted into categories of like information and through subsequent sorting of these categories, patterns and

themes became evident. As indicated by Braun & Clark (2006), researchers must acknowledge that decisions about categories and themes drawn from the data are shaped by the theoretical perspectives of the researchers and that these ideas shape interpretations and conclusions. However, careful reading and re-reading of raw data from the transcripts of the focus groups provide a type of triangulation of data (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996), especially considering that each researcher involved in this project independently reviewed and coded the data prior to engaging in collaborative conversations about discrepancies, categorization and consensus-building about patterns and themes. These processes helped to ensure completeness and accuracy of findings.

Findings & Discussion

The analysis of the transcribed focus group discussions revealed the following themes: (1) collaborative inquiry assists in the alignment of theory with practice; (2) collaborative inquiry assists in learning about mentoring and the importance of risk taking and dialogue; (3) collaborative inquiry assists in the co-construction of a collegial context for critical reflection that leads to improved practice; and (4), despite some tensions and discomfort, collaborative inquiry improves possibilities for student learning.

Alignment of Theory with Practice

In sharing their experiences, the interns discussed the alignment of theory and practice in relation to the professional reading they did with their mentors as part of the collaborative inquiry. They commented on the differences they found when reading for an on-campus class as compared to reading material suggested by their mentors, which was to be in direct support of classroom practices and their inquiry projects. For example, Intern Participant 2 commented,

"I've found those books, the readings we did, were so helpful - way more than anything that I've gotten in any of my education classes, like they're helpful but this was more practical to what I'm actually doing…" (p. 4) In pursuing their collaborative inquiry, both mentors and interns engaged in professional reading to suss out learning theories and supporting practices. The interns were clear that meaningful alignment of theory and practice was collaborative and 'in practice'.

When participants in the mentor focus group shared their experiences and perspectives with us, they offered various examples of the benefits of the collaborative component of the inquiry project for them as reflective practitioners. One mentor participant noted the affirmation of assumptions around classroom instruction and student engagement while two others observed the role the collaborative inquiry played in the alignment of theory and practice, bringing "…your theory and your kind of instinctual understanding…closer to the practices, the teaching practices and makes it all match" (Mentor Participant 2, p. 9). Mentor Participant 3 felt that while the inquiry "moved [the intern's] practice along" (p. 3), Mentor Participant 2 (pp. 13 – 14) viewed the inquiry as reciprocal in nature, providing the opportunity for conversations that mattered for both the mentor and the intern:

> I started talking to her (the intern) about this theory that I was learning about and she stopped me halfway and she said 'and how do you think you're doing with that?' And you know, it was like man, you held up a mirror for me and I realized in that moment that I'm not doing well with that and these are the reasons why.

Because the mentor and the intern had the opportunity to discuss what was happening in the classroom with their student learners and to assess the learning that was taking place with those

same learners, alignment of theory with practice was "a really powerful outcome…from doing things this way" (Mentor Participant 2, p. 2) for both the mentor and the pre-service teacher.

Learning the Role of Mentor: Risk-taking & Vulnerability

Similarly, the mentor teachers were able to identify the positive connection between the inquiry project and their role as mentors. For instance, Mentor Participant 2 found that the inquiry project offered an opportunity to learn about the role of the mentor in someone else's learning as well as the benefits of mentorship to one's own learning:

> It is about relationship building…you build this relationship and out of lots of different things and you know, some of those things are personal reflection, your own self, being a reflective person, you build it upon openness and you build it on vulnerability because you have to be able to say 'oh you know today things did not go the way I thought' and you have to be able to do that, so within that [relationship] you build together with all of those things - that is where the most learning happens… And so I feel like she's contributed to my understanding… and within that I have taken more risks and let go of a lot of the control, you know, I have, have allowed myself to step out a little bit of something that I maybe wouldn't normally do. …And we're both helping each other and holding up a mirror for each other and I think that's the wonderful part of it. (pp. 8 – 14)

Cooperating teachers do learn about mentoring when working with interns in usual ways. However, it appears that engaging with interns in a collaborative inquiry was a powerful co-learning experience in which mentors discovered more about the role of mentor, about the value of remaining open and vulnerable and about risk-taking.

Importance of Dialogue

Dialogue and collaboration between the mentor and the intern provided a foundation of trust and support which also positioned both the mentor and the pre-service teacher for criticality, the "willingness to wonder, to ask questions, and to seek understanding by collaborating with others in the attempt to make answers to them" (Wells, 1999, p. 121). Further, while practice alongside the experienced teacher supported the intern's exploration and questioning of both academic and situated knowledge, the co-constructed critical reflection and dialogue supported the creation of new mediated knowledge for the mentor as well.

Positioning interns to learn in practice by practicing alongside experienced teachers supports their "process of becoming" (Jaworski, 2006, p. 189) through participation in a community of practice but it can also lead to alignment with the practice of the rest of the community, thereby leading to a 'status quo' perpetuation of practice. Necessary then, in the practicum composition of mentor and intern, is critical alignment which conceives of teaching as co-learning in practice in a mode of critical inquiry:

> …the benefit of having an intern in our classroom is to actually talk about what best practice is on a daily basis that's been a real benefit and we learn better when we teach. So yes, we're teaching children but to be with someone else and collaborating and talking about what that best practice is, is actually being in that teaching mode and so we're internalizing more of what we're reading about and talking about and so I think there's a real benefit there. (Mentor Participant 5, p. 3)

According to Perry, Phillips and Hutchison (2006), "teachers who mentor newcomers to the profession benefit from updated knowledge about research and theory, reflecting on existing

practice, trying new strategies, and collaborating with other professionals" (p. 241). As evidenced in the observations by the mentors in this study, by continuously reconceptualizing best practice through collaborative inquiry, both the mentor and the intern had powerful learning experiences and transformative practice was co-produced.

Context for critical reflection to improve practice.

Similarly, for the pre-service teachers, it was important that a collegial context was established. A practicum that supported learning alongside a mentor was critical to their learning of day-to-day teaching practice and their understanding of student learning. For example, when Intern Participant 1 reflected on her growth during her practicum, she identified both the focused inquiry and the collaboration with her mentor as significant factors in her learning:

> …I think it is part of being involved in the collaborative inquiry because your cooperating teacher knows how to do that and they're setting you up with this collaborative inquiry to learn how to do that. Had this just been totally on our own and we had to figure it out, we probably wouldn't have come to the insight that we have without the help of our teacher. (p. 13)

Diversity of knowledge, experiences, expertise and perspectives generated the energy for change (Jacobs, 2007) but the willingness of both to create space for the other to "locate a wondering" (Dana & Yendol-Silva, 2003, p. 47) influenced the depth and the quality of the collaborative inquiry.

Hence, as noted by Clarke and Collins (2007), we cannot refer to the practicum as something that 'the pre-service teacher does,' but rather it is something we are all compliant in. The practicum, as a complex system, is constituted by a series of interactions, relationships, and

engagements and cannot be distinct or set apart from those (p. 170). Ongoing dialogue with mentor teachers encourages critical reflection, supports improved instructional practice and positions the pre-service teacher for enhanced professional competency. However, if the dialogue is also precipitated by a co-generated focus for inquiry, an example of the benefit of collaborative, critical inquiry is evidenced by the experiences of Intern Participant 1. With the support of her mentor, Intern Participant 1 was encouraged to reflect on concerns about her teaching practice and the learning of the students:

> My coop would always challenge me, whether I had given a lesson and it was great or whether it wasn't great, or working in small groups, or working with the whole group. ..and I stepped back at one point and it was like 'why are you doing this? Like, what are your kids learning? Do your kids know how they're learning this? Why are we doing this? Am I doing this because I reverted back to what I knew and what my education was?' (p. 8)

The collegial context of collaborative inquiry was important to the learning of the interns. While learning alongside a mentor enhanced their capacity for self-reflection, it likewise deepened their understanding of the concrete problems of day-to-day practice and student learning.

Collaborative inquiry improving student learning.

Because the mentor created the opportunity for proactive, collaborative co-learning, it was easier for the pre-service teacher to focus more on the learning outcomes for the students and focus less on whether or not she had accomplished the teaching outcomes. Further, the mentor recognized the educative possibilities for her own practice out of these conversations and "every question that [the intern] probed her with made her sit back and re-evaluate her teaching in the

way she [did] things and why she [did] things" (p. 2) as well. The collegial relationship between the pre-service and the in-service teacher encouraged reflective practice in support of increased student achievement while at the same time, creating the disequilibrium necessary for their learning (Jacobs, 2007). As Intern Participant 1 observed, working with a mentor encouraged self-reflection so that s/he was not left to "assume that you're awesome and you're [sic] kids are just going to get it" (p. 7). Intern Participant 2 also noted the importance of critical conversations that not only explored what promising practice is, but also, what promising practice is not:

> …my coop would always challenge me, whether it was I had given a lesson and it was great or whether it wasn't great, or working in small groups, or working with the whole group on doing writing and that, just like those little things should always just be like - okay, stop, and take a look, do you see something that could be different? Or what would you do different [sic]if you could? (p. 8-9)

As a result, the brainstorming, and "playing" with the questions (Dana & Yendol-Silva, 2003) at the centre of their inquiry provided insight into the spaces, both physical and conceptual, where teaching and learning happens and moved their practice along.

The significance of the idea that collaborative inquiry provides a meaningful focus in teacher education is highlighted when other studies that investigate the practicum as an important element in teacher education are taken into account. In a survey of 607 pre-service teachers (Murray-Harvey, Slee, Lawson, Silins, Banfield & Russel, 2000) regarding practicum concerns, "overall workload", "being evaluated" and "fear of failing the practicum" (p. 22) were themes common to participant response. Further research conducted by Kagan (1992) and Numrich (1996) likewise observed that the majority of pre-service teachers were mostly concerned about surviving their practicum. Similar concerns were raised by the in-service teacher mentors who

participated in our study. They found their interns "overwhelmed with the full-time teaching", "stressed with the workload" or "so busy [with] the mechanics of teaching" that they hadn't time to worry about the theory of teaching. However, with support from their mentors, the pre-service teachers were more able to focus on the risk-taking requisite to the inquiry piece and therefore, more able to focus on the needs and learning of their student learners. Intern Participant 1 stated,

> I wanted to read because what I read, I could go the next day to school and I could actually do it. And I could try it out and if it didn't work, okay, throw it out and try something new and different and keep reading in that book, see if we can find something new…being able to do a collaborative inquiry I think is something that needs to be kept." (p. 4)

The collaborative partnership created the security for the intern to make connections, to develop understandings without the threat of summative consequence while the risk-taking and, in the context of the collaborative inquiry, still created the potential for assessment *as* learning rather than *of* learning even in the event of novice error.

Discomfort a key to growth and change.

Anthony Clarke (2006) investigated the "nature and substance" (p. 919) of in-service teachers' work with pre-service teachers and noted a number of concerns based on their reflections during the practicum: "good teaching practice", "problems in communication", "discontent between student-teacher and advisor" (pp. 915 – 916). Similarly, interns who participated in this study observed challenges such as workload and stress-induced tensions. Mentor teachers who participated also identified workload as a challenge, and some alluded to a sense of insecurity in their role as mentors. However, while this collaborative inquiry did have

stressors that arose at times for both the in-service teacher and the pre-service teacher, the data leads us to suggest that their work together also contributed significantly to professional growth for both. Further, according to Barkley (2005), "…great coaches create environments where the coachee is comfortable with discomfort. Discomfort is key to growth and change. When good teachers become uncomfortable, that discomfort gives them impetus to improve, to wake up and get out of their box; it stimulates positive change" (p. 21). Participation in the collaborative inquiry positioned both the mentor and the intern for discomfort but that also lead to risk taking and hard questions and answers that benefited not only the pre-service and in-service teachers carrying out the inquiry but the student learners as well. It created opportunity for interns and mentors to develop trust and respect for each other while engaging in ongoing, reflective, collaborative dialogue:

> "It helped the [interns] to learn the things [they] needed to learn because it opened up that conversation for both of us, you know?...But it's that, just remembering [you] can't give them everything that [you've] learned in 30 years, in these few months…so it's about nudging and they control the direction, you know? They move the way they're going to, and [you] just give that little nudge in another direction, or encouragement" (Mentor Participant 6, p.12).

Conclusion

This study demonstrates how internship can be a transformative site for teacher education when mentors and interns learn together through engagement in collaborative inquiry. When field study was viewed by all parties as an opportunity for professional growth within a community of inquiry, both pre-service and in-service teachers aligned theory with practice,

learned more about the role of mentoring and the importance of risk-taking and discovered the importance of dialogue to co-produce transformative practice and new mediated knowledge. Despite some challenges and a degree of discomfort, mentors and interns who engaged in collaborative inquiry formed collegial relationships that enhanced critical reflection, contributed to development of professional competencies and enriched the learning experiences of the young learners with whom they worked.

However, we must acknowledge the limitations of our study. We recognize that our conclusions are based on data drawn from discussions with a relatively small and fairly select group of participants and that analysis of data drawn from a larger more diverse group could reshape our findings. We also appreciate that engagement in collaborative inquiries by project participants was predicated on the engagement of the in-service teachers in the graduate course that required development of such inquiries. Further, we understand the difficulties that could be encountered when attempting to implement a widespread requirement for collaborative inquiry among all mentor teachers and interns associated with our teacher education program. Implementation of inquiry approaches require that all participants possess the will, courage and commitment to overcome fears, tensions and challenges that accompany that development of a culture of inquiry (Epp & Lemisko, 2011). Nevertheless, we do have evidence to support the proposition that teachers will co-construct a culture of inquiry when they are encouraged to take the time to explore ideas together in a community of inquiry.

Overall, our study demonstrates that collaborative inquiry does enhance professional learning for both pre-service and in-service teachers and that internship can be the site where teacher education transpires. During our study, both pre-service and in-service teachers discovered how a degree of discomfort, combined with development of mutual trust and respect,

can be keys to professional growth and change. We recommend that all teachers be provided with professional learning opportunities that encourage risk-taking and that respects their engagement in the thoughtful reframing of practice. The internship is a site for teacher education where collaborative inquiry becomes an effective approach to partnering for transformative practice. It is the site where in-service and pre-service teachers can receive from each other "that little nudge" toward improvement of practice that results in thoughtful and intentional design of learning opportunities that motivate and engage students.

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Appendix A

Focus Group Guide

In what ways did you work with your intern (your cooperating teacher) to decide on the focus question for your inquiry?

In what ways did you work with your intern (your cooperating teacher) to carry out your inquiry?

Do you think engagement in the collaborative inquiry challenged your assumptions and if so, how?

(probes) Your assumptions about:

- pre-k to grade 12 learners?
- particular instructional strategy(ies)?
- program(s) or curriculum?
- personal or school or provincial initiatives?
- mentoring/mentoring relationships?

What kinds of knowledge do you think you deepened through engagement in the collaborative inquiry?

(probes)

- Understanding of pre-k to grade 12 learners?
- Understanding of instructional strategy(ies)?
- Understanding of program(s) or curriculum?
- Understanding of personal or school or provincial initiatives?
- Understanding of mentoring/mentoring relationships?
- Understanding of theories of teaching & learning?

What kinds of skills do you think you honed through engagement in the collaborative inquiry?

(probes)

- Capacities to work with pre-k to grade 12 learners?
- Capacities to use instructional strategy(ies)?
- Capacities to use program(s) or curriculum?
- Capacities to engage in personal or school or provincial initiatives?
- Capacities to mentor or engage in mentoring relationships?
- Capacities to use theories of teaching & learning?

What were the challenges (or tensions) involved in doing the collaborative inquiry?

Part 2

Who becomes or should become a teacher? Who is involved in this process of becoming?

Let Me Count the Reasons: What Motivates a New Generation to Become Teachers?

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Abstract

This chapter reports on a survey of 154 pre-service teachers (teacher candidates) enrolled in their first year of a 2-year Bachelor of Education degree program at the University of Manitoba in the 2011/2012 academic-year. The findings reveal that there are multiple altruistic, intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence their decisions to become teachers. With respect to the candidates' perceptions about a teaching career, the findings show that most held very positive perceptions about the profession, but that many indicated that there are numerous drawbacks to remain in teaching. The findings highlight the importance these factors have on the process of deciding to become a teacher. The conclusion illustrates the implications these factors have for teacher-educators and cooperating teachers involved in initial teacher preparation.

Introduction

Ensuring that a well-qualified and motivated teacher is in every classroom is a significant challenge for educational systems (Cranston, 2012; OECD, 2004). While everyone may agree on the importance of having effective teachers in every classroom, the problem of preparing the "best" candidates to become teachers remains a critical obstacle. The teaching profession must attract candidates who understand what teaching involves and then, once selected, they must be supported throughout their pre-service and in-service professional development (Author). The choice of profession is one of the most important decisions in a person's life, and it depends on a number of factors that can include such considerations as: personal inclinations and interests, aptitude and intellect, character and temperament, purpose and value orientations (Alexander, Chant & Cox, 1994; Elfers et al., 2008; Farkas, Johnson & Foleno, 2000; Jarvis & Woodrow, 2005).

The reasons why individuals become teachers, what motivates them to enter teaching and the challenges to remain in the profession have been attracting interest from educational researchers (Richardson & Watt, 2006; Roness, 2011; Roness & Smith, 2010; Watt & Richardson, 2007). Therefore, while there may be many reasons for becoming a teacher, this study explores whether some reasons are more important than others. Understanding the career choices of prospective teachers should be an essential component of the design and delivery of initial teacher preparation programs (Darling-Hammond, 2006) and ought to inform teacher recruitment and retention strategies (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

Teaching as a Career

Formal schooling is widely recognized as part of the fabric of a contemporary Canadian society (Wotherspoon, 2009; Young, Levin & Wallin, 2007). However, increasingly, authors (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Johnson, Berg & Donaldson, 2005) have suggested that teaching the 21st century learner requires different teaching approaches and a different kind of teacher than is found in many classrooms today. While teachers help students navigate successfully through an ever-changing world, the teacher workforce is simultaneously changing (Alberta Education, 2012). New teachers may find themselves in a career context that differs strikingly from the conditions experienced by the current cohort of teachers (Liu et al., 2000).

A number of authors (see for example Johnson, Berg & Donaldson, 2005; Peske, Liu, Johnson, Kauffman & Kardos, 2001) have indicated that the generation of teachers now retiring is likely to be the last to make teaching a life-long career. It has been suggested that the next generation of teachers, those after 1980 and belong to "Generation Y", hold different expectations about career mobility and job security than the majority of teachers who are currently in the workforce (Alberta Education, 2012; Johnson et al., 2005; National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, 2008; Peske et al., 2001).

Understanding the motivation behind the decision to become teachers and remain in the profession is important (Darling-Hammond, 2003 & 2006). Equally valuable is recognizing what pre-service teachers perceive as the challenges of teaching careers (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Such information may help better prepare candidates to be realistic in their expectations of the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2006). It may also help reduce teacher attrition by improving the quality of their preparation programs. Without a sound understanding of what drives individuals

to aspire to teach and what motivates them to remain in the profession teacher education, recruitment, and retention strategies are likely to be flawed.

While this study reports on the factors that pre-service teachers (referred to throughout this paper as "teacher candidates") considered being important in their decision to become teachers, the author does not to advocate for a specific career decision-making model (for examples of some career decision-making models, see Hilton, 1962; Holland, 1966, 1973, 1997; Super & Hall, 1978). Rather, the study assumed that career decision-making is neither completely rational (Bennett, Glennester & Nevision, 1992; Parsons, 1909) nor solely intuitive (Kahneman, 2003). The choice of a career is considered to be a long-term process that is influenced by multiple factors, such as: familial background, personal history, psychological, socio-cultural context, and economic considerations to name a few (Bubany, Krieshok, Black & McKay, 2008; Koksalan, Wallenius & Zionts, 2001; Tinsley, 1992).

Review of the Literature

It seems obvious great teachers make a profound difference in the lives of students (Cranston, 2012; OECD, 2004, 2005; National Council on Teacher Quality, 2004). Many people remember the personal qualities of a great teacher whose influence stretched into their adulthood—or who gave their own children a solid start in life (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2004). However, the elusive qualities of great teachers are hard to measure, and it has proven even harder to use them to predict who will become one (National Council on Teacher Quality).

Why Some Choose a Teaching Career

Arguably, different careers attract some people and repel others (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Bubany et al., 2008; Jarvis & Woodrow, 2005; Kyriacou, Hultgren, & Stephens, 1999; Young, 1995). However, in trying to discern what motivates people to become teachers, it is be possible to identify important attractors and deterrents of why some new entrants have chosen teaching.

Deciding to become a teacher is a complicated process (Alexander et al., 1994; Lipka & Brinthaupt, 1999; Lortie, 1975; Tinsley, 1992). The reasons people give are quite diverse and range from inspiration drawn from a former teacher to a sense of commitment to a community or a nation (Alexander et al., 1994; Elfers et al., 2000; Joseph & Green, 1986; Kyriacou & Coulthard, 2000). For some, the thought of becoming a teacher begins as a child (Gottfredson, 1996). For others, the idea begins in adulthood, and for some it follows another career (Chambers, 2002). A few compelling reasons that are often cited include the desire to work with children, a yearning to help children learn, and an interest to make a difference in society (Goldberg & Proctor, 2000; Lortie, 1975). Goldberg and Proctor (2000), in fact, proposed that two key motivators for why people enter teaching are because they have a desire to work with children and/or a love of the subject matter they will teach.

Included in the numerous factors researchers present as to why people become teachers are: the intellectual challenge associated with teaching; having a job that contributes to society; and belonging to a profession that is respected (Alexander et al., 1994; Elfers et al., 2008). In addition, some (Farkas et al., 2000; Hansen, 1995; Whitbeck, 2000) have suggested that individuals choose teaching to fulfill a sense of "calling" or vocation.

Furthermore, Parham and Austin (1994) posited that many believe that their career choice has been influenced by significant others, including parents and former teachers. In fact, Parham and Austin state that students who regarded teachers as role models are more likely to opt for the teaching profession. Bandura (1986), in his social learning theory, argued that a considerable amount of learning takes place through role modelling and observational learning, and social learning might influence career choices. Critical events, such as the death of a family member, personal financial crisis, or ill-health, and accidents may make individuals more likely to opt for teaching careers (Fisher & Griggs, 1995). Material benefits of teaching, such as working hours and vacation periods that align with those of school-aged children are also associated with why some choose teaching (Goodlad 1984; Rowsey & Ley 1986). In addition, Lortie (1975, p. 29) noted that some who attend school become so attracted to it that they are loathed to leave it. To these individuals, school had been a positive experience, thus making teaching attractive to "serve as a means of satisfying interests which might have been fostered and reinforced during school" (p. 29).

What seems clear is that people with different backgrounds and experiences, and different motivations to become a teacher are found in the profession (Ayers, 2001; Farkas et al., 2000; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003).

Teacher Candidates' Perceptions about the Teaching Profession

It is fairly well recognized that many teacher candidates already possess well-developed beliefs about the teaching profession (Elfers et al., 2008; Joram & Gabriele 1998; Lortie, 1975). No doubt teacher candidates bring preconceptions about the teaching profession and skills, which influence their choice of becoming teachers (Elfers et al., 2008; Lortie, 1975), and these

beliefs and perceptions may affect their effectiveness in the classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Lortie, 1975).

The choice of beginning a profession can be a long-term and difficult process that determines the individual's satisfaction with one's life (Tinsley, 1992). Identifying some of the factors that motivate individuals to become teachers and some of the drawbacks that may challenge them to remain in teaching, however, is warranted by those involved in developing the next generation of teachers.

A Conceptual Framework to Examine What Motivates People to Become Teachers

Numerous researchers (for examples Author, 2012; Crosswell & Elliot, 2004; Darling-Hammond 2003, 2006; National Council on Teacher Quality, 2004; OECD, 2004; 2005, among others) suggest that it is necessary to identify the individuals who are highly motivated to become teachers, support their pre-service professional development, and then hire those whose knowledge, skills, and dispositions suit notions of what constitutes effective teaching. Indeed, Crosswell and Elliot (2004) have argued that:

> Teacher commitment and engagement has been identified as one of the most critical factors in the success and future of education. It contributes to teachers' work performance, absenteeism, burnout and turnover, as well as having an important influence on students' achievement in, and attitude toward school. (p. 1)

Decades ago Lortie (1975) proposed that at a cognitive and emotional level occupations compete for members and there is a contest among occupations as individuals choose among alternative lines of work. While there have been critiques of Lortie's (1975) findings, most notably his claim about the strength of the "apprenticeship of observation" in determining how

teacher candidates will eventually teach (Delpit, 1995; Mewborn & Tyminski, 2006; Pajares, 1992), While much has changed since Lortie proposed the framework of "the attractions to teaching", it is still regarded as a viable conceptual lens for understanding the motivators that lead individuals to choose teaching as a career (Tusin, 1999; Younger, Brindley, Pedder & Haggel, 2007; Watt et al., 2012; Zeichner & Liston, 1987).

Lortie (1975, p. 26) defined an attractor or attraction to a particular profession as being the "comparative benefits (and costs) proffered would-be entrants," which could include such factors as money, prestige and power, and the socio-emotional attractions of the occupational tasks. Drawing on Lortie's work, this study's conceptual framework (see Figure 1, "Multifactor decision making model") examines the reasons individuals offered as contributory factors that influenced their decisions to choose a teaching career.

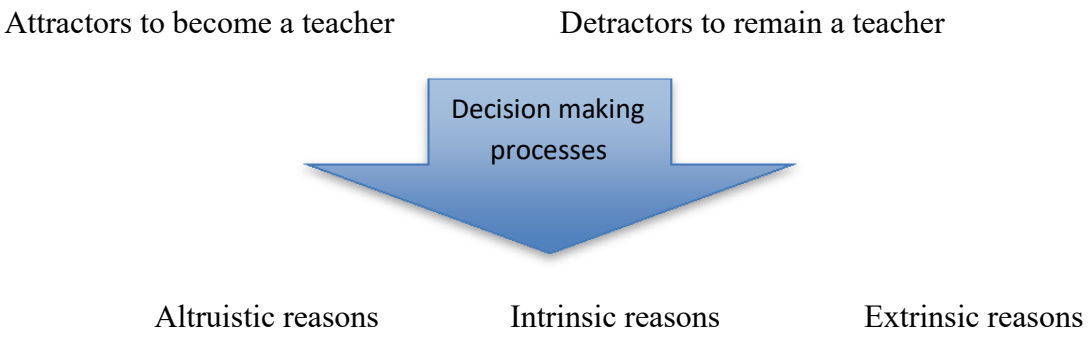
Using this model the factors were analyzed on three dimensions:

(a) Altruistic reasons: such as helping children succeed and/or a desire to help society improve;

(b) Intrinsic reasons: such as an interest in using their knowledge and expertise of a subject, and;

(c) Extrinsic reasons: such as fixed-holidays and hours, remuneration and/or job stability. (Lortie, 1975)

Figure 1. Multifactor decision-making model



The Research Problem

The study set out to answer the following questions:

1. What factors attract teacher candidates to become teachers?
2. What factors deter teacher candidates to remain in teaching?
3. Based on gender and generational cohort, are there differences in how are significant these are?

Methodology

This study used a questionnaire to collect information about the participants' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. Questionnaires can be used to gather data that explores teacher candidates' perceptions of the relative importance of specific factors that are considered attractors or drawbacks to a teaching career (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003).

This study illustrates what 154 teacher candidates in the first year of University of Manitoba's two-year Bachelor of Education degree program believed motivated them to consider a career in teaching.

The questionnaire was adapted with permission from one developed by the Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. It included questions to ensure respondents were new entrants to the Bachelor of Education program, demographic questions, and a combination of closed- and open-ended opinion questions. The study was approved by the appropriate institutional research ethics board.

All new teacher candidates were asked to complete a survey at the "Year One Teacher Candidate Orientation" held in September 2011. The response rate for the survey was 65%, which represents 154 of the total number of 237 first year teacher candidates enrolled in the 2011-12 academic year. As seen in Table 1, "Participants' demographic characteristics", 115 of the participants (approximately 75%) identified themselves as "Female" and 39 of the participants (approximately 25%) identified themselves as "Male".

Table 1: Participants' Demographic Characteristics (N = 154)

Gender	Number	Percentage
Female	115	75%
Male	39	25%
Generational cohort	Number	Percentage
Baby Boom Generation (born between 1946 – 1965)	2	1%
Generation X (born between 1966 – 1980)	20	13%
Generation Y (born between 1981 – 2000)	132	86%

The majority of the participants, 132 (86%), were born between 1981 and 2000 and as of the date of the survey were 30 years old or younger. According to Statistics Canada (Statistics Canada, 2012), those individuals born between 1981 and 2000 can be categorized as members of Generation Y (Gen Y). A much smaller percentage of the respondents, approximately 13%, were born between 1966 and 1980 and were between the ages of 31 and 45 years on the survey's completion date. Using the same Statistics Canada categories, these individuals can be

categorized as members of Generation X (Gen X). Finally, only 2 participants (1%) belonged to the Baby Boom Generation (Boomers) who were born between 1945 and 1965. These generational categories are neither precise demarcations nor are they meant to be used as pejorative labels. They are simply used as a means to compare the participants' perceptions on age-based generational categories.

Findings

Motivations to Become a Teacher

Overall, the majority of teacher candidates who entered the Bachelor of Education degree program are highly motivated to become teachers. Table 2, "Motivating factors for teacher candidates" illustrates the participants' responses, in percentage, of the factors that they considered as "important" and "very important" that influenced their decisions. For the majority of the respondents the four most important reasons for wanting to become a teacher were:

(1) Wanting to help children find success at school;

(2) Having the chance to influence a younger generation;

(3) Having a career that they could be passionate about; and

(4) Teaching a subject and/or subject-area they love and might be able to get children excited about.

Almost all of the participants indicated that these factors were significant in influencing their decisions to become teachers.

Table 2: Motivating factors for teacher candidates

Percentage of respondents who reported the factor as "Important" or "Very Important" motivator in deciding to become a teacher					
	All (N = 154)	Female (N = 115)	Male (N = 39)	Gen Y (N = 132)	Baby Boom/ Gen X[1] (N = 22)
Wanting to help children find success at school.	97%	97%	95%	96%	100%
Having a chance to influence a younger generation.	97%	97%	97%	95%	100%
Having a career I am passionate about.	97%	99%	92%	97%	95%
Teaching a subject and/or subject-area that I love and might get children excited about.	96%	96%	97%	96%	100%
Hoping to improve the education system and/or schools.	88%	92%	77%	89%	82%
Believing that there will always be a need for teachers.	83%	81%	87%	82%	77%
Being involved with children in another setting such as coaching, work, volunteering, etc.	82%	86%	69%	83%	77%
Having a teacher who inspired me to want to become a teacher.	81%	84%	74%	82%	86%
Having a career that has a level of job security.	72%	74%	67%	72%	68%
Having the opportunity to be regarded as a professional.	67%	70%	59%	67%	55%
Having access to health and retirement benefits.	61%	64%	51%	64%	27%
Having a work schedule that matches my children's and/or my partner's.	53%	60%	33%	54%	50%

[1] Due to the small numbers of Baby Boom (n = 2) and Generation X (n = 20) participants, the two generations were combined for analysis as "Baby Boom/Generation X".

Having summers, winter and March holiday breaks.	52%	52%	54%	57%	41%
Belonging to a professional association/union.	51%	51%	49%	52%	27%
Having the ability to teach outside of Manitoba.	45%	47%	40%	45%	41%
Having the opportunity to work part-time	38%	40%	26%	38%	41%
Having a parent and/or family member who was a teacher.	32%	32%	33%	33%	22%
Wanting to stay in university.	21%	25%	8%	22%	18%
Having teaching as a back-up plan in case my other career choice does not work out.	16%	15%	21%	17%	9%
Couldn't get into my preferred career choice at this time.	5%	4%	8%	6%	0%

In addition, there was very little difference in how important these factors were ranked between female and male teacher candidates or between the combined Baby Boomer/Generation X and Generation Y teacher candidates. Evidently, these are among the most significant factors that motivated the participants to choose to become teachers regardless of gender or age.

The vast majority of the respondents also indicated that they were motivated to become teachers because they believed that there would always be a need for teachers. And, there was very little difference between the female and male teacher candidates or between the two generational groups.

While a clear majority of the respondents (88%) identified their hope that teaching would allow them to improve the education system and/or schools, there were notable differences in how important this factor was ranked between females (92%) and males (77%). In addition, a significant difference existed between females and males in the influence that prior experience

working with children, for example coaching or volunteering, had on their decisions to become teachers. About 86% female respondents identified it as important in comparison to only 69% of the males (69%). However, when the responses are analysed with a focus on generational distinctions there is no significant difference in how important these two items are viewed.

Although 81% of the respondents listed the influence of a former teacher in their decisions to become teachers as a significant factor that influenced their decision to become teachers, there was relatively little difference between the perceptions of females (84%) and males (74%), and no significant difference between generations.

One the least important factors that these teacher candidates believed influenced their decisions was their desire to remain in university. It was considered as "important/very important" by only 21% of the candidates. However, while this item demonstrated a notable difference in relative importance between the genders (important for 25% of the female respondents and only 8% of males) there was very little difference in how important it was viewed between the two generational groupings.

Drawbacks to Remain in Teaching

While the responses suggested that the majority of the participants are highly motivated to enter the teaching profession and regard teaching is a positive light, Table 3, "The drawbacks for teacher candidates" illustrates that they perceive that there are a number of challenges to remain in the profession.

Table 3: The drawbacks for teacher candidates

Percentage of respondents who reported the factor as a "significant" or "very significant" drawback to remain in teaching					
	All (N = 154)	Female (N = 115)	Male (N = 39)	Gen Y (n = 132)	Baby Boom/ Gen X (N = 22)
Limited fulltime and/or permanent job opportunities.	62%	67%	46%	66%	50%
Lack of support from students' parents.	59%	61%	54%	59%	36%
Too many children with discipline and/or behaviour issues.	55%	55%	56%	56%	55%
Too many unmotivated students.	52%	53%	51%	52%	47%
Limited power to influence the system.	49%	52%	39%	51%	22%
Increasing workload demands.	48%	52%	36%	49%	24%
Limited influence to impact decisions beyond my classroom.	46%	47%	44%	47%	38%
Limited autonomy and/or control over one's work.	43%	43%	43%	45%	14%
Limited financial rewards for superior effort and/or performance in the classroom.	42%	44%	37%	44%	24%
Growing expectations for teachers to deal with student issues beyond academic learning.	41%	43%	36%	42%	24%
Relatively lower salary compared to some other professions.	41%	44%	31%	46%	14%
Limited opportunities for career advancement beyond the classroom.	41%	43%	33%	39%	14%
Lack of public support/respect for my career choice.	34%	37%	28%	35%	24%
Limited opportunities to collaborate with other teachers.	33%	35%	28%	34%	22%

Limited flexibility in the work schedule.	29%	30%	28%	30%	14%
Requirement for public school teachers to belong to a professional association/union.	15%	19%	3%	16%	0%

The most important factors that the respondents identified as a "significant" or "very significant" drawback were:

(1) Limited fulltime and/or permanent job opportunities (62%);

(2) Lack of support from students' parents (59%);

(3) Too many children with discipline and/or behaviour issues (55%); and

(4) Too many unmotivated students (52%).

Among these only one, namely limited fulltime and/or permanent job opportunities, illustrated a significant difference in opinion between both the females (67%) and males (46%) and also between the two generational groupings in so far as it was a significant drawback for 66% of the Generation Y candidates but only viewed as significant by 50% of the combined Baby Boom/Gen X group.

It is worth noting that a number of factors are perceived to be more significant drawbacks to remain in teaching by the Gen-Y candidates than they are by the older generations of teacher candidates. By-and-large female and male candidates regard the drawbacks quite similarly, while younger candidates, regardless of gender, believe that the drawbacks are more significant in their decision to stay in the profession.

Discussion

Deciding to choose a teaching career, may be a complicated decision making process for many people. While for some the thought of becoming a teacher begins as a child, for others the idea only begins in adulthood after other career and life experiences (Lortie, 1975). However, Kane and Mallon (2006) caution that teaching is not for everyone as it is a complex and challenging profession. In some respects, it is seems fair to suggest that teaching is the toughest job everyone who has never done it thinks they can do.

This study examined some of the factors that influence the decision-making processes to become a teacher of a specific cohort of teacher candidates at the University of Manitoba. Several aspects of the decision making process related to teacher candidates' beliefs and perceptions of a teaching career were not investigated in this study. It is impossible to make generalizations from a single study of 154 individuals. It is even harder to make broad interpretations of the findings given the small sample size and the very limited numbers of participants from some of the generational cohorts. However, this study aimed to obtain some insight, even if only limited, into the career motivations of these teacher candidates at the initial stage of the process of becoming a teacher.

Understanding the current multigenerational cohort of teacher candidates' views of teaching as a career option can be useful to teacher-educators concerned with developing initial teacher education programs that are responsive to both the factors that motivate individuals to become teachers and the factors they perceive are drawbacks to remain in teaching (Kyriacou & Coulthard 2000).

Overall, the participants had very high levels of career motivations and while they acknowledged that teaching has some drawbacks they were perceived as being less significant

than were the attractors. Therefore, in terms of occupational motivations, the teacher candidates regardless of gender and age are enthusiastic to join the teaching workforce.

The majority of these respondents are not strongly attracted to a teaching career through the appeal of the material benefits of teaching alone. Rather they are attracted by many of the same altruistic and intrinsic motivators that Lortie (1975) identified decades ago. Nevertheless it is important to note that considerations such as having: access to health and retirement benefits; a work schedule that matches a child's or partner's; summers, winter and March holiday breaks; and the opportunity to work part time are important considerations that still motivate people to consider teaching, and not to be overlooked.

Even though there have been some substantial changes in the teaching profession, such as the increased complexity of working with children and adolescents from all facets of society and responding with appropriate educational programming to support the gifts and challenges they bring to the classroom (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, 2008; Young et al., 2007), this multi-generational cohort of teacher candidates is not motivated by factors that are very different from previous who entered teaching in the 1950s through the 1970s (Haubrich, 1960; Lortie, 1975).

The idea that teaching is more than just a job has persisted for decades (Buijs, 2005; Farkas et al., 2000), and appears to motivate this new cohort of prospective teachers, one that spans three generations. It seems little changed in forty years with respect to the attraction that teaching as an act of service and as a means of serving society (Alexander et al., 1994; Buijs, 2005; Farkas et al., 2000). The fact that for this group of teacher candidates intrinsic motivations continue to be fundamental to their decision to become teachers is consistent with other relatively recent research findings (Johnson et al., 2005; Rice, 2005).

While the attractors to the profession seem consistent between genders and among the generations, perhaps not surprising, similarly the most significant drawback to remain in the profession for all teacher candidates regardless of gender or age was the limited number of fulltime and permanent teaching jobs. Consistently, the Generation Y teacher candidates regarded a number of the drawbacks as more significant than did their Generation X and Baby Boom colleagues. The pessimism concerning job prospects is endemic in Gen Y and should be a concern to teacher-educators and employers (Williamson & Myhill, 2008).

However, there are also some notable differences in the significance that other factors are perceived to be as drawbacks that might deter younger candidates from remaining in teaching. A number of factors were considered to be more significant for Generation Y candidates then they were for the other two generations. These include: (1) lack of support from students' parents; (2) limited power to influence the system; (3) limited influence to impact decisions beyond the classroom (4) limited autonomy and/or control over work; (5) increasing workload demands; (6) limited public support for the profession and (7) limited opportunities for career advancement beyond the classroom.

However, it is impossible to know whether the differences are indicative of differences among the values of the generations (Hall, 2005) or more indicative of the age and socio-emotional maturity of the respondents (Lent & Brown, 2000) or perhaps correlated to some of the harsh economic conditions of the times, which includes greater competition for teaching jobs, higher student debt loads, and work intensification (Williamson & Myhill, 2008).

While it has been suggested (Adams, 2003; Elfers et al, 2000) that teachers are often pessimistic about the public's opinion about the teaching profession, regardless of generation or gender this cohort of candidates are highly motivated to join the profession.. While this optimism

may seem strange to some currently employed teachers, the fact is that teacher status is actually far higher than teachers think it is (Johnson & Duffet, 2003; Waddell & Hallgarten, 2001). This contradiction between what aspiring teachers feel and what practicing teachers believe suggests that teachers themselves have the potential to contribute to the diminishment or the enhancement of the profession (Kane & Mallon, 2006; Waddell & Hallgarten, 2001).

These findings should not cloud the fact that while choosing to teach involves many of the laudable motivators, real or illusionary, that have attracted teachers for more than a century– working with young people and contributing to society – these attractors are increasingly countered by competing concerns about fixed incremental salaries, inadequate resources, isolating work, workload intensification, organizational hierarchy and limited career opportunities (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Kane & Mallon, 2006). These are issues that, according to Johnson and Birkeland (2003), take on ''new forms and meanings in the current context of work and schooling, a context in which prospective teachers face an unprecedented number of career options and the work of teachers is increasingly scrutinised'' (p. 582).

The findings in some regard are consistent with other research that has concluded that there may be few meaningful differences in the career motivational drivers among the Baby Boom, X- and Y-Generations (Wong, Gardiner, Lang & Coulon, 2008). Wong et al. have suggested that although differences among generational stereotypes in the workplace are pervasive in the management literature, empirical evidence suggests that these differences may be, in fact, quite small. Being conscious of both individual and also the group needs of each generation of new entrants into teaching is prudent (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009). However, it is important not to exaggerate the generational differences in terms of what individuals continue to value in the workplace and derive as meaningful from the work they do (Deal, 2007).

Teachers, educational leaders, and teacher-educators should not be defensive about the material benefits of teaching, for example the specific salaries, contact hours, fixed holiday periods and opportunities for part-time work. As the findings of this study illustrate, these factors matter to prospective teachers. Candidates need to be reminded that scheduled hours, holiday breaks and part-time opportunities allow them to engage in interests other than teaching, and to spend time with their families. Research has indicated that these are also key factors that have and continue to make the profession attractive (OECD, 2004).

Regardless of suggestions that there are significant generational differences in the factors that motivate Generation Y candidates (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009), the findings of this study illustrate that there were few meaningful differences in the career motivational drivers based on age or gender. Consequently, in order to meet the needs of this new multi-generational cohort of teacher candidates, prospective employers are reminded that research has suggested each generation has identified that the top five workplace needs that employees value are:

1) Opportunities for career advancement within the organization;

2) Balance between work and personal life;

3) Competitive remuneration and benefits;

4) A climate of respect and recognition; and

5) Opportunities for on-going learning and professional development (Hall, 2005).

In some regards, these attractors are precisely what these teacher candidates are looking for in the profession.

Finally, these findings draw attention to both the fact that there are attractors and deterrents that influence adults' career choices. People will continue to seek employment that is personally fulfilling, safe and offers adequate material benefits in the eyes of the applicants

(Alexander et al., 1994, OECD, 2004). Even though teaching is becoming more demanding, many people still aspire to teach as a lifetime career commitment. Teaching ought to be encouraged as a complex and challenging career that requires candidates to have the requisite dispositions and be willing to work hard to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to be effective in the classroom.

Future Directions

The results of this study seem timely as Canadian ministries of education and superintendents of some rural and Northern school districts attempt to wrestle with teacher labour market supply and demand characteristics and also attempt to improve teacher recruitment, restructure teachers' work and career ladders, reform teacher education programs, and improve professional development (Alberta Education, 2012; OECD, 2004, 2005). Although the difficulty in attracting and recruiting individuals into the teaching profession is not currently a uniform challenges throughout Canada, there are numerous northern districts (Kitchenham & Chasteauneuf, 2010) and First Nation Educational Authorities (Anderson, Horton & Orwick, 2004) who continuously struggle to find teachers. Promoting teaching as a career that makes an important contribution to society, a commitment that may require candidates to seek employment beyond their local communities, should be a priority for those involved in teacher education.

Further research is needed to better understand the subtle motives of teacher candidates to choose to become teachers because, as Behrstock and Clifford (2009) have forecasted, people under 30 years of age will make more than 40% of the working population by 2020 even though very little evidence exists that illuminates what motivates this generation to want to join the teaching profession. In view of the shifting societal norms and increased expectations of what

"teaching" entails, contemporary insights underlying the nuances of the decision making processes involved in choosing to become a teacher will better align initial teacher preparation programs with the motivations of teacher candidates. Children deserve to be taught by intelligent, competent, confident, caring and motivated individuals, and the profession needs to continue to attract and educate such people to become teachers.

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Exploring Changes in Teacher Candidates' Beliefs about Equity and Diversity

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Abstract

This study explored the beliefs of teacher candidates around diversity and equity, and whether their beliefs changed during an initial teacher education program. Essay questions from the application profile completed by applicants to an initial teacher education program were re-administered to six teacher candidates toward the end of the program. A qualitative analysis of the responses revealed little difference in the teacher candidates' beliefs around equity and diversity between the essays written as part of the application process and the essays written after teacher candidates had completed most of the program. From these results, it is difficult to determine whether the teacher candidates' beliefs remained constant or whether the essay questions were not sufficiently sensitive to change. Implications for future research are discussed.

In their 2009 examination of Canadian census data, Ryan, Pollock, and Antonelli found that Canadian schools have "proportionally many more students of colour than there are educators of colour [and that] more than this, the gap between the groups appears to be widening" (p. 599). This growing gap means that, as Childs, Broad, Gallagher-Mackay, Sher, Escayg, and McGrath (2011) have argued, Canadian schools need more teachers who represent the diversity of the student body. Our schools also need *all* teachers, whether or not they reflect the social identities of the students they teach, to be: 1) culturally responsive; 2) active agents in the development of equity and social justice; and 3) able to reflect critically upon their own beliefs and resulting professional behaviours. In short, as Easter, Shultz, Neyhart, and Reck (1999) express it, we need teachers that will see diversity as an asset rather than as a problem.

Initial teacher education (ITE) programs have an important role in selecting and preparing future teachers. Some of the knowledge, skills, and beliefs that teacher candidates will need to have when they finish an ITE program can be developed during the program; other aspects may be less possible to develop, especially during a one-year program, and so need to be selected for on entry to the program. Whether teacher candidates' beliefs about equity and diversity change during a one-year ITE program is not well understood. The study described in this chapter investigates teacher candidates' beliefs about equity and diversity near the end of their ITE program as compared to their pre-entry beliefs.

Literature Review

ITE programs seek not only to develop teacher candidates' knowledge and skills, but also to help them develop their professional identities as teachers and to encourage them to critically examine their beliefs about teaching and learning.

What is Identity?

Hammack (2008) described identity as an abstract system of social and political beliefs. This abstract system is formed and made meaningful through personal and master (group) narratives, that is, telling stories to make sense of both individual and shared experiences. In Hammack's view, the process of narratively developing one's identity is enacted through social practice, which means that identity is not 'static' but can develop as a process mediated by social and narrative engagement. This means that one's system of beliefs should be somewhat malleable depending upon the experiences one encounters and how a person interacts with and interprets social engagements. However, if a person avoids situations that could challenge their beliefs, there will be little opportunity for change.

Hammack's theory is particularly relevant for this study because ITE programs seek to help teacher candidates to develop their professional identities. Teacher candidates' beliefs about equity and diversity in relation to teaching and learning form a part of the basis for their professional identities.

Beliefs

Beliefs have been shown to be relatively stable, highly tenacious, and thus resistant to change – even when an individual is faced with contradictory evidence (Brown, 2004; Kagan, 1992). Because individuals interpret and act upon the world through the filter of their beliefs (Rust, 1994), what a teacher candidate believes will determine how they understand the information and experiences that they encounter during their teacher education program. When there is a disparity between the viewpoints presented by initial teacher education programs and the teacher candidate's own system of beliefs, those prior beliefs will affect the teacher

candidate's openness to learning (Tillema, 1994). This applies to all beliefs, but perhaps especially to beliefs about equity and diversity, which are embedded within, and can be difficult to separate from, an individual's broader system of beliefs (Pajares, 1992).

Theoretical Frame

According to Hammack (2008), the relationship between a personal narrative of identity and a master narrative may illuminate the process of social reproduction and change. In this study, the personal narratives of teacher candidates can be set against the backdrop of the master narrative of the culture of power through a postcolonial, anti-oppression, feminist framework.

In a system of education where oppressive colonial attitudes endure, the culture of power is perpetuated by both the oppressors and the oppressed (Freire, 1983; Hickling-Hudson, 1998; Kumashiro, 2001; Razack, 2008; Rezai-Rashti, 2005). Historically, education in Canada was controlled by upper middle class, White, heterosexual men of European origin (Mullaly, 2002). The system of education was structured to reproduce the culture of power in the values and 'knowledge' that it privileges and communicates to students (Wong, 2010).

Easter et al. (1999) describe what they call the "dichotomy of diversity": many current and future teachers either believe that diversity is a problem because minoritized children are perceived as not being able to learn as well as White, middle class children, or that diversity is an asset because it provides a richer environment, enhancing the educational experience for all children. Teachers who believe that diversity is a problem may more strongly identify with the historical culture of power in education; those who believe that diversity is an asset may threaten that culture of power. However, because schools are structured so that teachers play an important role in the socialization of students and future teachers (Cahill, 1986), all teachers' beliefs will

shape not only their own practices (Brown, 2004; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001; Silverman, 2010) but also their students' beliefs and eventual educational outcomes (Easter et al., 1999; Little & Bartlett, 2010).

This view of difference as a problem has been demonstrated within a Western Canadian context in research by Riley and Ungerleider (2008; 2012). In their 2008 study, Riley and Ungerleider found that 50 teacher candidates in a Canadian context consistently made lower placement recommendations for Aboriginal Grade 8 students in comparison to their non-Aboriginal counterparts. In 2012, the authors asked 21 teachers in a metropolitan area of Western Canada to review 24 student records (from Grade 4 to Grade 7) and categorize them for program options (remedial, standard or advanced). They found that "while teachers do think about how a student is being assessed, the way they think about their students reveals more about their expectations and biases than it does about student potential as represented by the grades expressed on the record cards" (Riley & Ungerleider, 2012, p. 310). This view of diversity as a problem is not unique to Canada; research in the United States has shown that a teacher's beliefs about students' academic potential could impact students' achievement in positive or negative ways – and that these beliefs have been strongly linked to the child's ethnicity (Blau, 2003; Brophy, 1983; Clifton, Perry, Parsonson, & Hryniuk, 1986).

Methods

Design

This study explored, through a pre and post design, whether there was evidence of change in teacher candidates' beliefs about equity and diversity. A qualitative analysis identified themes from teacher candidates' short answers on OISE's 2011 applicant profile (see Appendix A).

Responses given during their application to the university's ITE program (the pre measure) were compared to those given near the end of the school year in an online survey using the same questions (the post measure). First, themes were identified within and across participant responses for both pre and post measures. The themes identified were then compared within respondents to see if any change was detectable in their beliefs between application and survey responses.

Terminology.

The following terminology will be used:

- Application = Pre = Pre-entry = Application responses to profile
- Survey = Post = Pre-graduation = Online survey responses to profile
- Profile = 2011 Applicant profile completed by all applications to OISE's ITE program
- Program = 2011/2012 consecutive ITE program at OISE.

The Profile

To qualify for entry to the program, applicants must satisfy academic requirements and receive adequate ratings on a written profile. The minimum academic requirements for all applicants include: having at least a B range average in 15 full-year university courses; for those applying to the junior/intermediate and intermediate/senior streams requiring some teaching subjects, a minimum number of courses in specialty areas; and evidence of proficiency in English (English as a first language, studied in English for 3 years of university, or passed an approved test) (OISE, 2011). The minimum profile requirement is that the applicant receives no summary rating of Insufficient Evidence (as agreed upon by at least two readers) on any of the

three parts; this automatically excludes an applicant from the pool of eligible candidates. Conversely, should an individual receive a rating of High Pass on any of the three Parts (and no Insufficient Evidence ratings) they are almost certain to be accepted into the program.

The profile consists of three parts; Appendix A provides the complete preamble and question for each part. On the application for admission for the 2011/2012 academic year, Part 1 asked the respondent to identify three experiences that they believe prepared them for a career in teaching and then to describe one of those experiences, reflect upon what they learned about teaching and learning, and discuss how they would apply this learning to their work in schools. Part 2 gave an opportunity for the applicant to describe an instance of dis/advantage based on difference, reflect upon it in relation to equity and social justice, and discuss how they would apply this learning to their work in schools. In Part 3, respondents were asked to describe a personal experience that helped them to understand that diversity is an asset to teaching and learning, reflect upon what they learned, and discuss how they would apply this learning to their work in schools. Each question followed the same format in that it asked a specific question and then asked respondents to describe, reflect, and then apply what they learned.

Participants

About 200 teacher candidates enrolled in the primary/junior (P/J) stream and the junior/intermediate (J/I) stream of a one-year post-Bachelor's degree initial teacher education program were invited in the spring of 2012 to participate in the study. They were advised that participation would involve completing an online survey based on the profile that they completed as part of the application process to their current ITE program. They were also told that participation would include asking them to disclose their student number as consent for the

researcher to access their application profile responses. The reason behind this was to permit comparison of the online survey with the application profile responses.

In addition to completing the profile questions during the survey, participants were asked some demographic questions. Once the surveys were completed, a request was made of the Registrar's Office to gain access to the participants' application profile responses, as well as to the demographic information that they may have disclosed on the voluntary demographic collection form included at the end of the application profile.

Of the approximately 200 teacher candidates solicited, 10 initiated the online survey, but only six responded to the profile questions. This means that six teacher candidates' responses were available for analyses. The small number of responses means that it is not possible to draw conclusions about the larger group of teacher candidates. However, these responses did support a preliminary identification of themes and also a preliminary investigation of the use of essays such as these to study changes in beliefs. Table 1 describes the 6 respondents and how they self-identified at the time of the survey. Note that the participant ID in Table 1 corresponds to the participant ID used in Tables 2 though 7, which describe each participant's application and survey response themes. In some cases, respondents elected to provide more demographic information on the survey than they did when completing the voluntary demographic form during application. The survey responses are reported in Table 1.

Of the six participants who provided responses to the profile questions on the survey, half were working toward teaching qualifications in the P/J stream and half in the J/I stream – from four different class cohorts. Five out of the six usable respondents for this phase were from female teacher candidates. The ages of these respondents ranged from 23 to 44. All participants' first language was English and they had a variety of racial backgrounds and religions. There was

also a range in participants' parents' highest level of education – from none to university. None of the six participants indicated that they self-identified as having a disability or being of a minority sexual orientation. Overall, the six participants are generally representative of the current population of teacher candidates in the program.

Table 1

Participants' Background information

Participant	Program Stream	Gender	Age	First Language	Racial Self - Identification	Disability	Parent' s Highest Level of Education	Religion	Minority sexual orientation
1	J/I	F	44	English	White	None	High School	Other	No
2	P/J	M	25	English	White	None	University	prefer not to respond	No
3	P/J	F	23	English	Chinese	None	University	Christian	No
4	J/I	F	44	English	Other	None	None	Other	No
5	P/J	F	34	English	Black	None	College	Christian	No
6	J/I	F	24	English	Chinese	Prefer not to respond	High School	Other	No

Results

Application Responses across Participants

In Part 1A, applicants were asked to identify 3 experiences that they believe prepared them for a career in teaching. In this analysis, the disclosed experiences were grouped into four categories: 1) Classroom experience, which includes teaching in Asia, volunteering in a public school, working as a teaching assistant for an undergraduate course, or home schooling; 2)

Individual experience, which included personal art practice; 3) Extracurricular experience, which included working as a camp counsellor, volunteering with individuals with disabilities, and leading extracurricular activities and programs; and 4) Unique experience, which included working as a psychotherapist. Of the 18 experiences (3 experiences for each of the 6 respondents), 50% were classroom experiences, and 39% were extracurricular experiences; individual and unique experiences were each listed once.

Part 1B asked applicants to select one of the three experiences that they listed in 1A, and then describe it, reflect upon it, and talk about how they will apply what they learned in their future work in schools. Here, four of the six applicants (67%) chose to elaborate on a classroom experience while the other two wrote about extracurricular experiences (33%).

In the teacher candidates' reflections on classroom or extracurricular experiences, the two most common themes were that students have different needs and interests, and that different learner perspectives offer greater engagement or an opportunity for learning. One applicant reflected that the diversity of learners can be a challenge for teachers, while another talked about the importance of interactive and student centered teaching and learning.

The most common themes in the teacher candidates' descriptions of how they would apply what they learned were the importance of determining the students' different needs and interests, accommodating these different needs and interests by differentiating instruction, and engaging and involving students in knowledge construction. Individual comments also included the importance of keeping an open mind, encouraging collaboration / shared learning, modelling lifelong learning, and reflecting upon one's practice.

In Part 2, applicants were asked to describe a time when they or someone they know were advantaged or disadvantaged by difference. All six respondents chose to describe a situation of

disadvantage; two had experienced the disadvantage and four knew someone who had been disadvantaged. The situations that the two personal stories of disadvantage described were the social disadvantage of shyness and racial discrimination experienced throughout schooling. When talking about someone else, the four applicants related the experiences of: a friend's gender transition; unfair consequences to a group member based on gender and religion; the lower SES of a student in a school with higher SES children; and the schooling experiences of an Aboriginal community liaison.

In the respondents' reflections about the experiences of disadvantage, the most common themes that emerged were that difference may result in different treatment and different experiences of power affect behaviour and development. Individual comments also included that: discussion of difference helped learning; SES differences will always exist; teaching and learning involve relations of power and socialization; and an equity based approach to education can identify and remove barriers.

Regarding applying their learning, the most common themes among applicants were: supporting the critical examination of difference and discrimination; establishing an equitable learning environment; and accommodating students' different needs and interests / using differentiated instruction. Individual comments emphasized: learning about students' differential experiences of power; actively addressing discrimination when it occurs; embracing the whole child; engaging and involving students in knowledge construction; encouraging students to be leaders; and reflecting upon practice.

In Part 3, applicants were asked to describe a time when they came to see diversity as an asset. Three of the six respondents chose to talk about an experience where diversity served as a resource. One applicant described a time when they were challenged by another to reflect upon

their self-admittedly limited beliefs, another about a racial conflict that arose between students during an extracurricular activity, and the last about taking their first non-European focused history class, which was also their first class taught by a teacher who was a racialized minority.

The only theme common among respondents in the reflection portion of this part of the application was that diversity is a resource. Individual comments included: students have different needs and interests; it is important to reflect upon one's practice and assumptions; it is important to capitalize on learning opportunities; educators should support the critical examination of difference and discrimination; and finally "these women were not the same as me."

In relation to applying what they learned, common themes among applicants included: embracing the whole child; establishing an equitable learning environment; recognizing diversity as a resource; and supporting critical examination of difference and discrimination. Individual applications included: providing social justice and representative content; encouraging collaboration among students; and determining students' different needs and interests.

Survey Responses across Participants

In completing the online survey, study participants answered Part 1A, in which each participant listed three experiences, by listing ITE program experiences (33% of the experiences), pre-program classroom experiences (28%), pre-program experiences with individual students (17%), pre-program extracurricular experiences (17%), and finally one experience of working as a psychotherapist (also pre-program). Respondents' choices of experiences to list near the completion of their ITE program break down to 33% of experiences being related to their ITE program and 67% from prior to program entry.

On Part 1B, four out of six respondents (67%) chose to describe a pre-program classroom experience while two chose to describe a program practicum classroom experience (33%). Reflecting upon the experience, the only theme that emerged from more than one participant was that respecting students fosters positive relationships. Otherwise, individual comments included: teachers can learn from students; students have different needs and interests; barriers can be learning opportunities; different needs require different strategies; and accommodations can reduce frustration and increase engagement. Regarding applying what they learned, the only theme to emerge from more than one respondent was that they would accommodate different needs and interests / use differentiated instruction. Individual ideas on how to apply their learning included: using peer work; determining individual needs and interests; and engaging and involving students in the construction of knowledge.

Five of the six respondents to Part 2 chose to describe an instance of disadvantage where differential treatment / experience was based on difference. Knowing someone who experienced disadvantage was described using: others being disadvantaged because the respondent was treated better than the locals as the only foreigner; unfair consequences to a group member based on gender and religion; the challenges to getting an education for a student with disabilities; and the respondent being disadvantaged because of minority classmates being offered jobs with a local school board. Personal experiences included: the racial discrimination experienced throughout schooling; and one person's parents' experience of "disadvantage because of their skin colour and language barrier."

There were two themes that emerged from more than one respondent in reflecting upon what they learned based on the instance of dis/advantage that they described in Part 2. These themes were that systematic injustices because of difference are complicated and layered, and

that educators should engage in reflective and inclusive practices. Individual comments included: differential experiences of power affect behaviour and development; difference breeds different treatment; there is an under-representation of minority teachers; and inaction can also be harmful.

Three themes emerged related to applying the learning described in Part 2: 1) establishing equitable relations with students; 2) accommodating different needs and interests / differential instruction; and 3) providing social justice and representative content. Individual comments included: keeping an open mind; supporting students; establishing an equitable learning environment; and engaging in lifelong learning.

For Part 3, four participants chose to describe ITE program related experiences: two participants chose to describe a practicum experience that showed diversity as an asset, and two chose to describe instances of observed differential treatment / experience based on difference (i.e., insights that came with friendship with another student in the program with Cerebral Palsy, and a student who felt different from the majority based on background), and another chose to describe a time when diversity served as a resource. Only one participant chose to describe pre ITE program entry experiences: being challenged to reflect upon their beliefs prior to program entry.

Only one theme emerged across participants in reflecting on what they learned from the instance of diversity as an asset that they described in Part 3: that diversity is a resource. Individual comments included: differential instruction is beneficial and engaging for all; students with disabilities face challenges trying to get an education; concrete exposure makes learning real; group work enables students to feel valued; group work draws on a variety of skills and strengths; and the representativeness of teachers helps to inspire students.

In discussing how they would apply this learning, two themes emerged: 1) accommodating different needs and interests / differentiated instruction; and 2) establishing an equitable learning environment. Individual comments included: reflecting upon practice; supporting critical examination of difference and discrimination; and having high expectations for all because all students can have success.

Application and Survey Responses within Participants

Tables 2 through 7 illustrate the application and survey response themes for participants 1 through 6. Note that the participant IDs in Table 1 above corresponds to the participant IDs used in Tables 2 though 7.

Table 2

Participant 1 Responses

Profile Part	Application Response	Survey Response
1A	2 Classroom & 1 Unique experiences: 1. Teaching in Asia 2. Volunteering in Public School 3. Psychotherapist	2 Independent & 1 Unique (same) experiences (pre-program): 1. 7 years of independent travel 2. Gestalt psychotherapist 3. camera assistant in film industry
1B Describe	Classroom experience: • 4/5 class at Warren Park P.S. • Poetry Writing and adjectives	Classroom experience (pre-program; different): • Grade 4 Catholic school • "Teacher had me teach boy shedidn't have patience for"
1B Reflect	• Different individual needs	• Treating students with respect develops relationships • Learn a lot teaching someone else • Different individual needs
1B Apply	• Determine individual needs	• Peer work • Determine individual needs • Respect individual needs

2 Describe	Someone else's experience: • Friend's gender transition	Personal experience (pre-program; different): • Differential (advantageous) treatment as foreigner
2 Reflect	• Gender roles affect perception of people	• Differential experiences of power affect behaviour • Sense of self affected by life experiences
2 Apply	• Learn about students' experiences of discrimination • Support them in overcoming • Facilitate critical discussion • Encourage active involvement	• Keep open mind • Examine own biases • Establish equitable relations with students
3 Describe	Unique personal experience: • Tailoring psychotherapy to diverse needs	Personal practicum experience (ITE program; different): • One boy responded well to my lesson approach • Other students responded well as well
3 Reflect	• Different learning styles & needs • Difference enriched learning • "These women were not the same as me"	• Differentiated instruction beneficial and engaging for all
3 Apply	• Determine individual learning styles & needs • Holistic approach to programming • Encourage collaboration • Establish equitable learning environment	• Differentiate instruction

Table 3

Participant 2 Responses

Profile Part	Application Response	Survey Response
1A	2 Extracurricular & 1 Classroom experience: 1. Volunteering with students with disabilities 2. Volunteering with students with disabilities 3. Teaching in Asia	1 Extracurricular, 1 Classroom, & 1 Unique experience (1st 2 same pre-program; 3rd also pre-program but different): 1. Teaching in Asia 2. Volunteering with students with disabilities 3. School liaison with community

		organization
1B Describe	Classroom experience: • Teaching in Asia	Classroom experience (different aspect of same pre-program experience): • Teaching in Asia
1B Reflect	• Different needs & interests	• Barriers as learning opportunities
1B Apply	• Determine needs & interests • Apply to instruction • Keep an open mind	
2 Describe	Someone else's experience: • Group member unfairly punished based on difference of gender and religion	Someone else's experience (same pre-program experience): • Differential treatment based on difference – Group member unfairly punished based on difference of gender and religion
2 Reflect	• Difference breeds different treatment • Discussion helped learning	• Differential treatment based on identity / difference • Systemic injustices against difference
2 Apply	• Teach about discrimination • Actively address discrimination when it occurs	• Establish equitable relations with students • Support students
3 Describe	Extracurricular personal experience: • Educational seminars and discussions with youth group	Personal experience (pre-program; different): • "was a very religious and close minded student" • Undergraduate professor challenged me to question
3 Reflect	• Varied backgrounds enriched discussion • Similar backgrounds cannot enrich discussion	• Diversity of beliefs enriches – "I needed a diversity of beliefs to find what I REALLY believe is right and just"
3 Apply	• embrace and use diversity of teachers and students in traditions and thinkings	• Reflect upon practice • Encourage & value diverse perspectives

Table 4

Participant 3 Responses

Profile Part	Application Response	Survey Response
1A	2 Extracurricular & 1 Classroom experience (all in the same setting): 1. Teaching in Asia 2. Teaching in Asia 3. Extracurricular activity leader	1 Extracurricular (pre-program; different) & 2 Classroom (both pre-program; 1 same) experiences: 1. Teaching in Asia 2. Tutoring 3. Camp Counsellor
1B Describe	Classroom experience: • Teaching in Asia	Classroom experience (pre-program; same setting, different experience): • Teaching in Asia
1B Reflect	• Different perspectives engaging	• Different needs require different strategies
1B Apply	• Develop skills and knowledge through variety of means	• Exercise patience with struggling learners
2 Describe	Classroom experience; Someone else's: • Lower SES child in higher SES school	Someone else's experience of schooling (ITE program): • Differential treatment / exclusion based on difference – A teacher candidate with disabilities was not able to do all the Daily Physical Activity (DPA) actions
2 Reflect	• Child felt inferior • SES differences will always exist	• "we really have to be conscious of inclusion in everything that we do"
2 Apply	• Establish equitable learning environment	• Identify different perspectives • Use different methods to be inclusive
3 Describe	High School Personal experience: • Teacher's breadth of knowledge in culturally varied music class	Personal experience (ITE program): • different teachers of different backgrounds know other authors and resources … helps create a diversity in the classroom library
3 Reflect	• Sharing in knowledge construction creates bonds and common ground for diverse learners	• Diversity enriches learning & resources
3 Apply	• Culture sharing activities • Increase own global knowledge	• Critically discuss diversity with students

Table 5

Participant 4 Responses

Profile Part	Application Response	Survey Response
1A	3 Different experiences: 1. Classroom experience 2. Extracurricular experience 3. Personal art practice	3 ITE Program experiences: 1. Practicum 2. Practicum 3. ITE Program experience as older teacher candidate
1B Describe	Extracurricular Volunteering with students with disabilities	Practicum Classroom experience
1B Reflect	• Different individual needs • As opportunity for learning	• Respecting students as people fosters positive relationships
1B Apply	• Discuss learners' role in learning • Encourage collaboration / shared learning • Model lifelong learning	
2 Describe	High School Shyness as social disadvantage	ITE Program "My cohort classmates that got _DSB interviews were all the non-white students"
2 Reflect	• Much of school is about socialization • Alienation affects self-esteem	• Under-representation of minority teachers • Need more minority teachers
2 Apply	• Get to know whole student • Include individual differences in learning environment • Establish equitable learning environment	• Provide content representative of the students in the classroom
3 Describe	Personal Role model pointed out respondent's privilege	Relational Insights from friendship with handicapped classmate
3 Reflect	• Value of experience as knowledge • Continually reflect upon assumptions • Active and ongoing discussion about difference creates understanding	• Students with disabilities face challenges trying to get an education • Concrete exposure makes learning real
3 Apply	• Draw on student backgrounds in planning • Select representative materials • Establish inclusive environment that fosters discussion	• Casual conversations • "Include disabled in my lessons"

Table 6

Participant 5 Responses

Profile Part	Application Response	Survey Response
1A	3 Classroom experiences: 1. Parent & homeschool educator of child with autism 2. TA undergrad course 3. Volunteering in public school	3 Classroom experiences (same pre-program experiences): 1. Parent & homeschool educator of child with autism 2. TA undergrad course 3. Volunteering in public school
1B Describe	Classroom experience • Parent & homeschool educator of child with autism	Classroom experience (same pre-program experience) • Parent & homeschool educator of child with autism
1B Reflect	• Diversity of learners a challenge for teachers	• Chunking tasks reduces frustration and increases engagement
1B Apply	• Accommodate different needs • Refrain from privileging certain ways of learning • Invite student insight sharing	• Teach children with autism explicitly
2 Describe	High School: Differential treatment based on difference - Discriminated against in schooling based on race	High School (same pre-program experience): Differential treatment based on difference - Discriminated against in schooling based on race
2 Reflect	• Teaching & learning as relations of power • Power relations can limit or motivate learning	• Educators need to have an equity & social justice lens • Teachers as holders of power & responsibility • Self-reflection
2 Apply	• Establish equitable learning environment • Welcome diverse opinions • Empower disadvantaged to engage	• Social justice & equity themed lessons • Differentiated instruction for different needs • Establish equitable learning environment
3 Describe	High School • First non-European focused history class • First racial minority teacher	Classroom experience (ITE Program Practicum) • asked my students to work in groups… required… variety of skills to present the

		material to the class
3 Reflect	• Diversity of teachers & learners necessary for learning • Diversity of experiences & perspectives expand knowledge & make learning more inclusive	• Group work enables students to feel valued • Group work draws on variety of skills & strengths
3 Apply	• Diversely representative lessons • Scaffold critical thinking skills	• High expectations for all - All students can have success • Differentiated instruction

Table 7

Participant 6 Responses

Profile Part	Application Response	Survey Response
1A	3 Extracurricular experiences: 1. Camp counsellor in Aboriginal community 2. Program assistant, English language program UT 3. Eco-literacy leader UT	3 ITE Program experiences: 1. ITE class exercises 2. Practicum 3. ITE cohort relationship building
1B Describe	Extracurricular experience: Camp counsellor	ITE Program experience: Practicum – building relationships with students
1B Reflect	• Importance of interactive & student centered teaching & learning	
1B Apply	• Engage and involve students in knowledge construction	• Solicit student input • Holistic – get to know them and incorporate into teaching
2 Describe	Someone else's experience: • Aboriginal community liaison's experience of lack of educational support and resources	Someone else's experience: • Differential treatment based on difference – "My parents were disadvantaged because of their skin colour and language barrier"
2 Reflect	• Equity based approach to education identifies and removes barriers	• Complicated and layered • Inaction equally harmful • Practice must be reflective and inclusive
2 Apply	• Establish equitable learning environment • Adapting teaching methods to	• Genuinely listen to my students • Lifelong learning

	abilities • Including diversity of cultures and worldviews • Involving students and community in knowledge forming process • Encouraging students to be leaders • Evaluating teaching practices continuously	• Reflect upon my teaching practices and philosophy
3 Describe	Extracurricular experience: • Racial conflict between students	Someone else's experience (ITE program experience): • Differential experience based on difference – student in class feels left out because a minority – but feels fortunate to have 3 teachers of similar background to him
3 Reflect	• Important to capitalize on learning opportunities	• Representativeness of teachers helps inspire students
3 Apply	• Scaffold critical thinking skills • Establish open & equitable learning environment	• Already answered

Discussion

Looking Across and Within Participants

Part 1B: Teaching and learning.

Remember that Part 1B on the profile asks respondents to describe, reflect upon, and apply their learning from a specific interaction that taught them about teaching and learning. On both their application and survey responses, half of the six participants chose to describe the same pre-program classroom experiences, two of which discussed different aspects of the same experience, while one used the exact same experience on both. Two of the six participants described an extracurricular pre-program experience at application and a program practicum

classroom experience on the survey. One participant described a different pre-program classroom experience at application from the one they described on the survey.

Reflecting upon, and applying what they learned from the experiences that they described, all six respondents noted similar insights and actions between application and the survey. There were some notable exceptions: three of the six participants expanded upon the application insights and/or actions in their survey responses. Participant 1 showed some growth on the post measure by including more insights and applications to the original (and re-stated on the survey) insights and applications expressed in their pre responses. Participant 3's response on the apply portion of the survey response demonstrated an increased experience and knowledge of working with students by being more specific – their application response for 1B showed a general knowledge and willingness to help students. Participant 6's survey response about applying the learning began with the same application as at the pre measure, but added more actions.

On Part 1B, half of the participants demonstrated an increase in profession-specific knowledge and understanding of students, growth that would be expected of students in a professional teacher training program in general. While there is certainly evidence of development in half of the participants, there is no indication of a change in beliefs between pre-program entry and pre-graduation from a consecutive ITE program.

Part 2: Dis/advantage based on difference.

Part 2 of the profile asked respondents to describe an instance of advantage or disadvantage based on difference, reflect upon the experience, and apply what they learned to their work in schools. Two of the six participants chose to describe the same pre-program

experiences at application and on the survey. While one of them described the same personal experience, the other described the same experience external to them regarding disadvantage based on difference. Two more participants chose to describe different experiences, though both external to themselves, on both their application and survey responses. One participant described a personal disadvantage on their application but an external disadvantage on their survey response. Finally, though five of the participants chose to describe experiences of disadvantage – whether personally experienced or experienced by others (i.e., external to themselves) – one chose to describe their own position of advantage in relation to those around them. This participant (1) described someone else's experience at application and their personal experience on the survey.

All six respondents noted similar insights and actions between application and the survey when reflecting upon and applying what they learned from the experiences that they described. There were some noteworthy exceptions. Participant 1, as in Part 1B, recorded the same reflections and actions between application and the survey, but added more to their response on the survey. This was also the case for Participant 5, who added the importance of reflective practice on their survey response. Participant 4's reflections were quite different and it is therefore difficult to discern if their reflections demonstrate any change in beliefs or not. None of the participants demonstrated any measurable change in beliefs between applying to the program and being near its completion.

Part 3: Diversity as an asset.

Profile Part 3 asked respondents to describe an experience that helped them to learn that diversity of teachers and learners is an asset to learning. As in Parts 1B and 2, they also needed

to reflect upon the experience and apply what they learned to their work in schools. Interestingly, five of the six participants chose to describe an ITE program experience for their survey response on Part 3. This is the highest proportion among the three profile parts where respondents described either a personal or extracurricular *pre-program* experience at application and then described a *program-related* experience on the survey. Only Participant 2 chose to describe two different pre-program experiences at application and on the survey.

In reflecting upon and applying what they learned from the experiences that they described, all six respondents noted similar insights and actions between the application and the survey. Participant 6 shared two different reflections between application and the survey, making it difficult to determine whether there was any change in beliefs. On the action portion of their survey responses, Participants 2 and 6 added more ways to apply their learning from their Part 3 experiences. It is interesting to note that the only participant that showed some evidence of growth on this question was Participant 3; this is because they added more specific detail on how to accomplish their actions between pre and post.

Was Change Evident?

Overall, the six participants' responses demonstrated no change in beliefs around equity and diversity between applying to OISE's consecutive ITE program and being near graduation from the program. Any growth that was demonstrated was attributable to an increased professional understanding of students from a teaching perspective. The growth evidenced during the program likely came, as would be expected, as a result of engaging in this type of professional training program.

These preliminary findings seem to suggest that this teacher preparation does not cause measurable change in its students' beliefs around equity and diversity. This in turn suggests that the ITE admissions process does indeed need to select candidates who already demonstrate a certain propensity for cultural sensitivity and equity mindedness. All of this is in line with the literature that beliefs are highly tenacious (Brown, 2004; Kagan, 1992) and that teacher candidates will filter the learning and experiences in their ITE program through their personal beliefs (Rust, 1994), or the ideological content of their identity (Hammack, 2008). Given that beliefs are resistant to change, a teacher education program is not likely to change a person's system of beliefs. Perhaps this is, at least in part, because beliefs about equity and diversity are embedded within a larger system of beliefs, making them hard to separate from one's identity (Pajares, 1992).

This does not mean that initial teacher education programs should not specifically target equity and social justice and try to produce teachers who are culturally sensitive and equity minded. Because beliefs are one of the best predictors of a teacher's own practices (Brown, 2004; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001; Silverman, 2010) but also their students' beliefs and eventual outcomes (Easter et al., 1999; Little & Bartlett, 2010), we need to address applicants' and teacher candidates' deeply held beliefs about teaching and teachers. Only then will we be able to begin to change the beliefs of teachers in a way that benefits all students.

Limitations

It is possible that the lack of evident change in beliefs may be at least partially due to the format of the survey, which was constrained by the need to follow the format of the three application profile questions. Because the only data available about the participants' beliefs prior

to entering the program were the application profile responses, this limited the format and structure of the follow up survey – we needed to ensure that the same measure was used in order to best compare responses for evidence of any change in expressed beliefs.

The survey involved short answer responses that took respondents at least 10 minutes to complete. The survey came at a time in their program where they were near completion and had a variety of priorities such as applying for jobs, completing assignments, and preparing for their internships. Additionally, no compensation was offered beyond the researcher's gratitude.

Implications

Easter et al. (1999) predict that the teachers of tomorrow will continue to mirror the predominant group represented in today's teaching force, namely White, female, and middle class. Familiarity with an education system in which this teaching force has been the norm influences the view of who can and should be a teacher. It also ensures that the culture of power, based upon the views of White, middle to upper class males is perpetuated as the norm. Teachers participate significantly in normalizing the culture of power in a given society because they influence our ideas of who can and should be a teacher and they normalize the learning environment's structure and rules. If we are to work toward a system of education that promotes the valuing of equity and diversity, then one important place to begin is with teacher education; future teachers must be chosen who demonstrate a true capacity to be culturally responsive and equity minded in both their attitudes and pedagogical stances. As well, teacher education programs must work to develop these qualities in their candidates. Teacher education is the entry point to change within the system of education.

This exploratory study began the process of examining whether an initial teacher education program can prepare teachers to educate a diverse body of students or whether it is the responsibility of admissions to select applicants who already demonstrate these beliefs. If we do not explore teacher candidates' beliefs, then we may be perpetuating an antiquated and ineffectual system of education and teaching practices that does not (and was not built to) serve the needs of every learner (Pajares, 1992). Brown (2004) puts it succinctly in saying "understanding the nature of beliefs, attitudes, and values is essential to understanding future [teachers'] choices, decisions, and effectiveness regarding issues of diversity, social justice, and equity" (p. 332). Brown argues that beliefs can be changed through a gradual process of identification, challenge, and reflection. If this is the case, then ITE programs will need to examine how they work with their teacher candidates to prepare them to work effectively with diverse learners with an eye toward equitable practice. An important first step is to make teacher candidates' implicit beliefs explicit in order to critically examine them.

In conclusion, although it is difficult to determine from this exploratory study whether the lack of change in teacher candidates' beliefs about equity and diversity is because teacher candidates' beliefs did not develop or because the essay questions are not sufficiently sensitive to change, this study highlights the importance of trying to measure teacher candidates' beliefs and the changes in beliefs.

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Appendix A. OISE's 2011 Applicant Profile

PART One
Introduction

This question is an opportunity for you to show that **you have learned about teaching and learning through reflecting on your experiences**.

In answering this question, consider a wide range of experiences, such as peer tutoring, classroom/school experience, ongoing service to the community, work experience, coaching, leadership of clubs, supply teaching, working with people with special needs, experience with nongovernmental organizations, teaching overseas, camp counselling, involvement in faith-based teaching activities, parenting, and mentoring apprentices or co-operative education students.

As these examples suggest, the experiences need not be in schools or with children. Also note that the 3 experiences you describe must not be in the same setting and that at least 1 experience must be with a group of 5 or more individuals.

Expectations
In your response, our Evaluators expect that you will:

- describe 3 experiences that are in at least 2 different settings
- include at least 1 experience with a group of 5 or more individuals
- from 1 of the experiences, describe 1 specific interaction between you and a learner or group of learners
- describe what you learned about teaching and learning from the interaction
- describe how this learning came from the interaction
- describe what specific action(s) you will take to apply this learning in your work in schools

Questions – When answering these questions, refer to the above introduction and expectations

(A)
Describe three experiences that you believe prepared you for a career in teaching. Identify the setting for each experience and specify what you did in each experience that you believe prepared you.

You may use point form. There is a 150 word limit (50 words per experience).

(B)
Describe 1 specific interaction you had with a learner or group of learners during one of these experiences. Include what you did or said and what the learner(s) did or said. What did you learn about teaching and learning from this specific interaction? What specific action(s) will you take to apply this learning in your work in schools?

Use full sentences. There is a 250 word limit.

PART Two
Introduction

This question is an opportunity for you to show that you understand that **you will have a responsibility to support equity and social justice through your work with students and families.**

The differences that characterize teachers, students and their families include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status (this list is from Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009), place of origin, and citizenship. These differences can be linked to experiences of advantage and disadvantage.

Expectations
In your response, our Evaluators expect that you will:

- clearly describe an example of advantage or disadvantage based on difference
- describe what you have learned about equity and social justice from this experience
- describe how this learning came from the experience
- describe what action(s) you will take to apply this learning to your work in schools

Question – When answering this question, refer to the above introduction and expectations

Describe a time when you, or someone you know, was advantaged or disadvantaged based on difference. What did you learn about equity and social justice from this experience? What specific action(s) will you take to apply this learning in your work in schools?

Use full sentences. There is a 250 word limit.

PART Three
Introduction

This question is an opportunity for you to show that **you understand that the diversity of teachers and learners is an asset for learning**.

As stated in Part 2, the differences that characterize teachers, students and their families include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status (this list is from Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009), place of origin, and citizenship. Every group of teachers and learners is diverse in at least some of these ways. You may refer to any aspects of diversity in your response.

Expectations
In your response our Evaluators expect that you will:

- clearly describe a personal experience that helped you understand that diversity of teachers and learners is an asset for learning (the experience does not have to be in a school)
- describe what you have learned about why or how diversity is an asset for learning from this experience
- describe how this learning came from the experience
- describe what specific action(s) you will take to apply this understanding in your work in schools

Question – When answering this question, refer to the above introduction and expectations

Describe a personal experience that helped you understand that diversity of teachers and learners is an asset for learning. What did you learn about why or how diversity is an asset from this experience? What specific action(s) will you take to apply this understanding in your work in schools?

Use full sentences. There is a 250 word limit.

Part 3: *When does a person become a teacher and what does identifying that moment mean for learning to become?*

Disrupting Teacher Development: The Role of Teacher Education

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Abstract

In this chapter it is argued that teacher education programs can use the admissions process to systematically assess the prior knowledge of applicants and use those assessments as mechanisms to promote double disruption: the disruption of both candidates' prior conceptions and the teacher education program itself. This dual disruption is derived from an analysis of admissions processes in Atlantic Canada, a discussion of how cognitive frames are assessed, and constructivism enacted in teacher education programs. We conclude with recommendations for how teacher education programs in Canada could modify their admissions processes to be able to respond to the information collected from the teacher candidates.

Introduction

"I know that I have what it takes to be a great teacher. I recently completed my BA in English and history and understand the academic process. I love the arts and believe I can get students interested in them." So begins the required 'statement of intent' portion of an application to our university's B.Ed program.[1] Another applicant writes, "I had a number of teachers who played an important role in my development. They were always there for me and helped me work through the difficult problems of adolescence. I want to be that kind of teacher; a caring teacher that students feel comfortable coming to with their problems."

These candidates clearly have conceptions of what a good teacher is and those conceptions – at least as reflected in these brief excerpts – are different. The first emphasizes the teacher as academic expert and mentor. He or she knows and loves their academic disciplines and sees a teacher's role as fostering the same kind of knowledge and appreciation in their students. The second applicant conceptualizes a teacher as caring counselor, open to and available for students with personal issues. Our point here is not to critique these ideas or suggest they are complete or mutually exclusive, but to point out that these, and all other applicants to initial teacher education programs already have clear cognitive models of what a teacher is. Not only have they begun the process of becoming a teacher long before they enter a university professional program, their reflections also demonstrated they have begun to conceptualize the profession as well.

This is widely known, of course, which is why something like the 'statement of intent' is required on application forms for most initial teacher education programs in Canada (Casey & Childs 2011). As Falkenberg (2010) points out, these statements are used to assess the prior

[1] These student statements are our adaptations of a number of themes we see in actual applications. No actual statements have been used.

knowledge of applicants related to teaching and learning largely to help select those who best fit the program and the profession (or at least who the faculty involved in selection think will fit best). In this chapter we argue teacher education programs can use the admissions process to systematically assess the prior knowledge of applicants and use those assessments as mechanisms to promote double disruption: the disruption of both candidates' prior conceptions and the teacher education program itself.

The Importance of Prior Knowledge

A central tenet of what Howard Gardner (2006a, p. 74) calls "the cognitive revolution" of the 20th century is that "prior knowledge matters" (Sears 2009, p. 145) to teaching and learning. People come to any learning situation with a set of cognitive structures that filter and shape new information in powerful ways. Gardner (2006a, p. 76) calls these structures "mental representations" and argues they underlie the fact that "individuals do not just react to or perform in the world; they possess minds and these minds contain images, schemes, pictures, frames, languages, ideas, and the like." The literature uses a range of terms but generally refers to this phenomenon as prior knowledge; meaning the knowledge learners brings with them to the classroom or any other learning situation.

Research demonstrates not only that learners bring mental representations or schemata with them to learning situations, but that these filter and shape new learning (Sears 2009). These mental representations or frameworks are often incomplete, "naïve" (Byrnes & Torney-Purta, 1995), or "simply wrong" (Gardner 2006b, p. 54). When presented with information that does not fit existing structures learners will often distort it or discard it completely rather than doing the difficult work necessary to restructure their frameworks. Research on prior knowledge

consistently shows cognitive schema to be persistent and resistant to change. As Gardner (2006b, p. 1) puts it, "Minds, of course, are hard to change."

A key component of the constructivist approaches to teaching and learning that dominate curricular and policy documents in public education in Canada and teacher education programs is that attention to prior knowledge is essential to good teaching (Richardson 1997; Windschitl 2002; Peck, Sears and Donaldson 2009). A fundamental principle of constructivist approaches is to begin where students are and help them to both construct new knowledge on that foundation and, where necessary, tear apart and reconstruct prior knowledge. As Gardner (2006a, 77) writes, "If one wants to educate for genuine understanding . . . it is important to identify these early representations, appreciate their power, and confront them directly and repeatedly."

Prior Knowledge and Teacher Education in Canada

David Ausubel (1968, p. vi), an early proponent of the role of prior knowledge in teaching and learning, summed up its importance with his two part dictum, "The most important single factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows. Ascertain this and teach him [sic] accordingly." There is growing interest in collecting information to better assess candidates for admission to teacher education programs in Canada and around the world (Turner and Turner 2000, Casey and Childs 2007, Valli and Johnson 2007, Brown, Brown and Brown 2008). Elsewhere (Hirschkorn, Sears and Sloat 2011) we have described a range of approaches to collecting data on candidates ranging from minimalist (relying on written application packages alone) to maximalist (adding things like interviews, micro teaching demonstrations, or preparatory courses to the written package). Even in institutions employing maximalist approaches to the application process, however, there is little evidence that information is being

used to assess the conceptual frames of teacher candidates in ways that might be used to plan more effective teaching and learning experiences for them.

Falkenberg (2010) examined research related to admissions processes for teacher education programs in North America and found that most programs made some attempt through a variety of means ranging from standardized tests through written statements to interviews, to assess the prior knowledge or cognitive frames of applicants. The most substantial models he found in Canada were those outlined in the work of Casey and Childs (2007). In this, and other work (Casey and Childs 2011; Thompson et al. 2011) researchers at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) set out the case for research-oriented approaches to developing and implementing admissions procedures for teacher education programs. They provide an overview of research into the correlation between various admissions criteria and success in both teacher education programs as a whole and the experiential or student teaching components of those programs in particular. They describe in some detail the writing component of the admissions process at OISE and how they have worked to make it a valid and reliable instrument for assessing the relevant qualities of applicants.

Even these procedures, Falkenberg (2010) argues, are limited in that they are unidirectional; they seek candidates with qualities (including prior knowledge) that best fit preexisting and fixed programs but do not allow for the possibility of "program adaptability." Program adaptability, as Falkenberg describes it, is consistent with the second part of Ausubel's mandate that teaching should be designed to meet the learner where they are in order to take them some place new. "At the centre of this dynamic approach," he writes, "lies the idea that the program is designed to be responsive to the qualities that teacher candidates bring with them" (Falkenberg 2010, pp. 22-23).

To extend the work reported above and in preparation for writing this chapter, we examined application procedures for four initial teacher education (ITE) programs in Atlantic Canada, one from each province: the University of New Brunswick (UNB), Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN), St. Francis Xavier University (StFX), and the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI). The public information that each program lists on their websites and application packages was analyzed in detail for evidence that these programs consider applicants' prior knowledge in the admissions process, what types of prior knowledge are most valued, and is there any indication this information is used to inform the program. The www.teacheredcanada.ca database was also used as a source of information in this endeavor (Data collection fields are outlined in Table 1). Because this is the vision of their program that these institutions communicate to the public, it is an effective method to determine what prospective students are being told are valuable qualities to possess as prospective teachers in Atlantic Canada. Presumably it also provides evidence of how the information that is gathered during admissions might be used by the institution to inform the education program and its faculty.

Table 1 Data collection fields

General admission requirements	Specializations
Program duration	Placement opportunities
Interviews	Future/prospective students page features
Where the word "competitive" is used	"Hook" in message from the Dean
Number of students admitted	Mission statement
Admissions timeline	Application package

Elementary stream requirements	Applications fees
Middle stream requirements	Referees
Secondary stream requirements	

We focused our examination of the data on determining if the assertion by Falkenberg that programs seek to screen but not use the information to modify their offerings is evident in the information made available to the public. We also evaluated the screening mechanisms for their potential to provide rich information about the cognitive frames of applicants. Information that might be used to both disrupt teacher education programs to make them more responsive to the candidates who are admitted and to plan disruptive experiences for those candidates themselves.

The types of prior knowledge that these four institutions screen for fall into several categories including looking for academic experts and caring counselors as reflected in the cognitive frames of the applicants profiled above, but also skilled practitioners and effective and collaborative colleagues. This knowledge is sought through a range of mechanisms we grouped into three categories: Academic Credentials; Personal Statements; and References. All the institutions collect data in these categories although the specific means for that and the relative weighting of the areas in admission decisions differ.

We noted that several institutions, most notably StFX and UPEI, are very prescriptive in setting out what they expect from applicants. Both these institutions offer specific examples applicants could list for their volunteer and community involvement, work and life experiences. StFX specifies that experiences with diversity and inclusive practices and activities related to teachable subjects should be highlighted; this correlates with their program mission statement, which speaks to “molding those with a passion for teaching” and ensuring job-readiness. For

UPEI in particular, whose lists are quite detailed for each area of experience the applicant is asked to describe, the order of experiences on this list may indicate that knowledge of the school system and teaching profession may provide the applicant with an advantage. At certain points on UPEI's application applicants are essentially told what the admissions committee wants to read: "Teachers need to be well-rounded, well-informed individuals. It is important that educators not only be able to teach well, but also that they contribute to staff activities, school life, and assist youth in developing their interests and abilities." This indicates that UPEI values, what we would describe as *teachers as good citizens* in their program.

StFX provides the most specific guidelines for the personal statement. Applicants are asked to explain why they want to be a teacher, and are provided with a quotation from the book *The Dreamkeepers*, by Gloria Ladson-Billings. The quotation speaks to applicants not simply stating that they like children, but indicating a love of learning and the value of knowledge as well. Applicants are advised "Your essay will be evaluated on your articulation of your view of students, view of subject matter and vision for schooling." This indicates some expectation of candidates' prior knowledge not only of content, but also of a teacher's role and responsibilities in the classroom and in the greater school context. Since Ladson-Billings is a well known social justice advocate, this suggests that StFX values this quality in the prospective teachers admitted to their program.

It seems to us that providing this level of prescription makes it unlikely that responses will reflect the applicants' thinking but rather what they surmise the assessors want to hear. Valli and Johnson (2007) point out that several studies of admission processes in Finland found that in interviews candidates often provide common answers to questions reflecting not their own

beliefs and values but those they believe the interviewers and institutions want to hear. The level of detail and background provided in the prompts described above make this even more likely.

The data clearly indicates that the teacher education programs examined attempt to assess at least some aspects of the prior knowledge, dispositions, personal qualities, and skills of applicants. The institutions use a variety of sets of evidence to do this, including academic transcripts, written personal statements, references, and, in at least one case, interviews. Examining the nature of the instruments used to collect this evidence along with the instructions given to candidates in preparing their applications packages it is possible to sketch out a preliminary map or frame of how the institutions themselves conceptualize teachers and teaching. Although each program has individual nuances in terms of the conception of teaching revealed in its admissions instruments and the degree of specificity provided about that conception, there are some common critical attributes. Good teachers are seen as: having a significant degree of academic expertise; being motivated by compassion and concern for young people and society; having a high degree of competence in particular skills including the ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing; and being good professional citizens willing and able to work collaboratively and professionally with others.

The criteria outlined also demonstrate that these institutions assume that applicants – at least good ones – already have developed these attributes to a significant degree before presenting themselves for admission to ITE; they are well along in the process of developing as teachers. Indeed, Falkenberg (2010, p. 7) argues, "At the heart of the admissions problem is the identification of particular qualities of applicants."

Falkenberg contends, however, that the identification of these qualities is often not for the purposes of developing pedagogical responses to them but for the purpose of selecting

candidates who already fit best with the way the programs conceptualize teaching and learning. In other words, rather than using the data to develop deep understandings of the cognitive frames of teacher candidates in order to adjust (or disrupt) the program to be able to provide the disruptive experiences necessary for new learning, programs try to select candidates who require minimal disruption. The structure of programs themselves is assumed to be fixed and candidates have to fit.

It is not possible to tell from the data we collected exactly how the evidence gathered from admissions packages is used, but all indications are that what is sought is student fit as described by Falkenberg. As outlined above, the programs that are the most prescriptive in their stated requirements leave little room for variance in the prior knowledge and other qualities required of beginning teachers. They are looking for individuals who already correspond and there is no evidence they will adjust program requirements, structure, or experiences to fit the candidate pool.

If, as Russell (2013) indicates, it is so difficult to alter the prior learning of candidates, then it is no surprise that programs seek to choose students who are already inclined to resonate with the emphasis of the program. However, Falkenberg argues that for a range of reasons this approach to admissions is inadequate, and we agree. In a constructivist framework the purpose of mapping prior conceptions is not to screen out people with naïve, ill-formed, or incomplete conceptions but to develop a basis for engaging students where they are and moving them forward; to paraphrase Ausubel, to ascertain what they know, in order to teach them accordingly.

Having said that, we are not opposed to using data about candidates' cognitive frames as part of the criteria for admissions to ITE. We agree with Falkenberg (2010) when he writes, "…even in a program that is flexible and responsive, certain attributes are required for those

coming into the program." As pointed out above, preexisting cognitive frames are very resistant to change so selecting candidates with more potential for change in appropriate directions does make sense. To leave it at that, however, is a problem for several reasons. First, although we argue elsewhere (Hirschkorn, Sears and Sloat 2011) that there is widespread consensus in faculties of education about appropriate thinking both about disciplinary knowledge and approaches to teaching and learning, there is and will always be some disagreement about what desired cognitive frames might be. Second, particularly in an era of declining applications to ITE, it will be impossible to find sufficient numbers of candidates who closely fit the desired ways of thinking. Finally, such an approach limits the potential of ITE to foster transformational change, which is, we argue, a key function of the enterprise. The admissions criteria for teacher education programs clearly assume, as do we, that teacher development is a life long process. Teacher education, we contend, is different from teacher development. It is specifically designed interventions structured to foster significant change and growth.

In the remainder of this paper we bring together the work of Childs, Casey and other scholars working to make admissions procedures to teacher education programs more substantial with Falkenberg's (2010, p. 27) idea that "the relationship between program design and attributes of applicants is [or can be] bi-directional." We argue that if we can develop admissions procedures that facilitate accurately mapping the cognitive frames of candidates to teacher education programs, then we can use that data to foster a double disruption. The first disruption is to the teacher education program itself as it is adjusted to better take into account what we know about incoming students. The second disruption will be to the cognitive frames of those students as they encounter material and activities specifically designed to challenge their thinking and foster deep reflection.

Mapping Candidates Cognitive Frames

The first question, of course, is, can this even be done? Is it possible to include activities in admissions processes that will collect substantial information on the cognitive frames of applicants without making the process overly burdensome? First, we concur with Valli and Johnson (2007) who argue that the selection of strong candidates for ITE is a key component of the whole enterprise and worth the investment of significant time and energy. They make a compelling case for the value of a multi stage process that along with the standard written packages includes interviews and demonstration lessons.

The Faculty of Education at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, Canada, goes even further in requiring potential applicants to their Bachelor of Education program to take a full course as part of their university work prior to applying to the Faculty. The course includes both university seminars and school placements:

> [It] has four purposes: to explore contemporary education, to help each student to assess the personal suitability of teaching as a career, to assist the Faculty of Education, in partnership with the teaching profession, to evaluate students' potential for teaching and for admission to the B.Ed. program and to assist the student in beginning to make the transition from student to professional educator" (Butt, Grigg and McConahy 2010, p.2).

Following completion of the course, students meet individually with an instructor to discuss their suitability for the teaching profession and in addition to a grade receive an assessment ranging from Highly Recommended (HR) to Not Recommended (NR).

Having said that, we believe it is possible to build more substantial attention to uncovering candidates' cognitive frames into much less labour intensive procedures. Thompson and her colleagues at OISE (Thompson et al. 2011, p. 4) developed a process of assessing "three

brief essays in which applicants demonstrate: (a) that they have learned about teaching and learning through reflecting on their experiences with learners, (b) that they know they will have a responsibility to support equity and social justice in their work as a teacher, and (c) that they have some understanding of the effect their social identity would have on how students viewed them." They developed a clear set of criteria for assessing the essays and worked hard on developing inter-rater reliability for ensuring consistency in assessment. While demanding less time and resources than interviews, demonstration activities, and running full courses, this kind of "a research supported admissions process [still] requires a commitment of resources" (p. 17).

There are a number of sources on which to draw for designing procedures and activities for getting at the prior conceptions of applicants. First, the work on student conceptions in a range of fields provides a plethora of ideas for getting at how people understand key concepts and processes related to particular disciplines (for example, Sears 2009). Second, the field of phenomenographic research, which seeks to map the ways in which people conceptualize important ideas, includes a significant body of work related to understanding of higher education and professional practice, including teaching (e.g. Marton 1984; Richardson 1999; Carlsson, Fülöp Marton, 2001). Finally, there is a growing body of research on pre and in-service teachers' cognitive frames. For example, a number of studies have used concept mapping as a means for describing how teachers think about their profession (see Vincente et al. 2008, Seezink, Poell and Kirschner 2009) or the subject matter they teach (Milligan, Taylor and Wood 2011). The techniques used to collect data in these studies could be employed fairly easily in assessment processes for selecting teacher education candidates.

The recent study by Ell, Hill and Grudnoff (2012) provides a particularly good example of the latter. The researchers sought to "look beyond subject matter knowledge to investigate

whether teacher candidates held prior knowledge about teaching and learning" (p. 56). To that end they asked the candidates assess two brief samples of children's work; one in mathematics and one in writing. The researchers hypothesized that the candidates would operate more like laypeople than teacher experts in their assessments but were surprised to find that "in both mathematics and writing around half the teacher candidates recognized the key features outlined by the experts" (P. 59). The authors acknowledge that the study is preliminary and "focuses on one small part of the complex skills and understandings that teachers need in order to assess formatively in their classrooms" (p. 56), but it does demonstrate two very important things relative to this chapter: first, that it is possible to assess important aspects of candidates' prior knowledge with relatively short activities; and, second, that our assumptions about the sophistication level of teacher candidates prior knowledge are often wrong.

Disruption 1: Troubling Prior Knowledge

With Falkenberg (2010) and others (Thompson et al. 2011) we believe it is absolutely essential to move beyond the use of data collected during the admissions process for gatekeeping purposes alone. As we point out in the introduction to this paper, teacher development begins long before students arrive in ITE programs and continues long after. Teachers are continual works-in-progress and we define the lifetime of experiences that influence the identity and practice of a teacher, either pre-, during or post- education program, as *teacher development.* This would include all of the learning of a prospective teacher prior to entering the program; a period that includes what Lortie (1975) described as the apprenticeship of observation; the teacher education program; and, all of the experiential /professional learning that teachers undergo throughout their careers. By contrast, we label their time within the program as *teacher*

education, and we define this period as a series of intentional experiences which motivate prospective teachers to become pedagogues with the knowledge, skills and attitudes deemed necessary by teacher educators to be effective and inspiring in the classroom. Similarly, in their book *Understanding Teacher Development,* Hargreaves & Fullan (1992) chose chapters/topics which clearly indicate that they conceptualize teacher development as occurring beyond the boundaries of teacher education programs, but yet includes these programs in the process.

Conceptual change as a concern and theory is well discussed in the research literature. Duit (2002) reported that over 3000 empirical studies on various aspects of students' conceptions were published over 25 years starting in the late 1960's. In 1982, Posner, Strike, Hewson and Gertzog proposed a conceptual change model (CCM), which became a common starting point for much research that followed it. Posner et al listed four conditions required for conceptual change to occur:

(1) "There must be dissatisfaction with existing conceptions."

(2) "A new conception must be intelligible."

(3) "A new conception must appear initially plausible."

(4) "A new concept should suggest the possibility of a fruitful research program." (p.214)

What was intriguing about this model was that it offered a method for addressing the naïve or alternate conceptions of individuals, and that it was built on two assumptions: That prior conceptions were difficult to change and that a key in the process was that these conceptions needed to be disrupted in some fashion. Posner et al. describes how Thomas Kuhn's work describing scientific revolutions and Jean Piaget's work on assimilation/accommodation as the basis of adaptation, were highly influential in the creation of this model. Tom Russell (2013) has argued that teacher education programs do little to change the naïve and ill-informed conceptions

of teaching formed during a lifetime of schooling, and that some shake-up to their prior conceptions if teacher education programs are to have a significant influence on prospective teachers. The specific mechanisms described by the these individuals for disrupting or building upon this prior learning varies, but we would like to focus on one aspect they all have in common, the idea of disruption (cognitive dissonance), and apply this to teacher education admissions and programs.

The creation of cognitive dissonance depends on directly addressing existing conceptions and creating questions about them. That depends on instructors knowing something about those conceptions and, as the work of Ell and her colleagues (Ell, Hill and Grudnoff 2012) discussed above makes clear, a cohort of candidates with likely have a range of conceptions that will not always fit our preconceived assumptions. One way to provide instructors with an idea of the prior conceptions of the students in their classes would be to provide them with a compilation of relevant data collected during the admission process that they could use in designing activities to directly address the cognitive frames of students.

For example, Milligan, Taylor and Wood (2011) examined how a group of teachers in New Zealand conceptualized citizenship finding their thinking to be quite different from the way citizenship was framed in political theory or school curricula. While educational policy mandated a broad and critical approach to citizenship typical of curricula around the democratic world, the teachers tended to think in much more constrained terms. The authors conclude that "while a critical edge was detectable in some teachers' responses, such as calls for including the voices of marginalized others, the discussions were notable for their lack of alternative framings of citizenship" (p. 296). They argue it is essential to directly address this kind of frame in teacher education and elsewhere.

> We urge that stakeholders in the social studies community present 'citizenship' in ways that allow teachers to better understand its contested nature. Furthermore, and if learners are to explore citizenship in any meaningful sense, teachers need to be engaged in ongoing dialogue about the concept. Teacher education courses, for example, have an important role to play in supporting teachers to critique dominant ideologies and monocultural perspectives of citizenship (p. 298).

Designing admissions procedures to provide data like this about how students think about subject matter and providing compilations of that data to relevant instructors, would allow them to do the kinds of things advocated by Milligan and her colleagues to disrupt the preconceptions teacher candidates bring with them to class.

Disruption 2: Troubling ITE Programs

Providing information to instructors that they can use in better planning for the particular students in their class is relatively easy. Changing the structure of teacher education programs can be vastly more difficult. Yet as Thompson and her research team content (Thompson et al. 2011, p. 16), while it is important to develop a systematic, data informed, research basis for admissions, "programs also need an openness to responding to research findings." Some responses could be uncomplicated and immediate while others will be much more difficult to implement and take the time required to change program structures and regulations.

An example of the former can be drawn from the work of Ell, Hill and Grudnoff (2012) discussed above. We know from research on cognitive change that one effective strategy to foster growth is to group students so that they will regularly engage with conceptions different and more sophisticated than their own. That particular study found a significant range of

understanding of the teachers' role across the cohort of teacher candidates studied. That kind of finding from admissions data would allow administrators to make sure particular classes were structured to include groups of students across the range thereby laying the groundwork for encounters that might foster cognitive development. Other relatively short-term strategies to address particular findings relative to students' cognitive frames might be specific PD days, site visits to particular education contexts, and encounters with educators working from different perspectives.

As admissions data builds from year to year findings might indicate that more substantial program change is necessary to address the prior knowledge of incoming students. For example, across Canada there is widespread consensus that ITE should prepare teachers to foster diversity, inclusion and social justice. The Accord on Initial Teacher Education signed by Canadian Deans of Education states,

> Canadian society is increasingly diverse. Schools contain students with a broad range of backgrounds and ethnicities, with emotional and social differences, and with widely varied approaches to learning, home lives, and out-of-school experiences Canada's teachers must be equipped to prepare all students for their roles in this diverse world (Association of Canadian Deans of Education 2005, p. 1).

If admissions data were to show a trend over time of teacher candidates with narrow or naive conceptions of diversity and social justice, ITE programs might want to make want to make significant structural changes to meet address that. These might include new required courses or program streams, internships in alternative settings, requirement for community based learning experiences focused on social justice, etc. This would require substantial discussion among faculty, detailed articulation of proposals, and movement through the relevant university

regulatory procedures. This is a lot of work but it seems to us that we often undertake this kind of program change based on hunches or personal preferences and it would be much better done based at least in part on data about the prior knowledge of students.

Conclusion

In our study of the four teacher education programs in Atlantic Canada we sought evidence that the programs were seeking information about the prospective education students that would allow the people in admissions some evidence of the disciplinary and professional inclinations of their candidate pool. However, we also sought evidence that these programs were using this information as data that informed the program features offered; ways that the candidates or the program might be disrupted to improve the quality of the program for that particular cohort. After all when we teach, we seek to differentiate our instruction so that individuals might benefit, can we not approach our teacher education programs with a similar willingness? In order to do this we need awareness of our education students and the flexibility and will to change.

We were pleased to discover that there does seem to be an attempt by all four institutions studied to collect information that might be used as data to inform the program of the disciplinary and professional inclinations of the students entering the program. However, there is little evidence for our study or those of others that ITE programs have the mechanisms or the flexibility necessary to use this information to create moments of intentional disruption through the offering of particular program features that might change according to the data that is gathered from the cohort entering the program.

Teacher education is not a slow accumulation of skills and perspectives as is suggested in a deficit model of learning (Oberski et al 1999) – teacher candidates are not empty vessels to be filled with the abilities and orientations of a teacher. Rather, we propose that teacher education happens in primarily epiphanic moments in which the prior learning and preconceptions of prospective teachers are disrupted, leaving them seeking to resolve the conflict they feel with more sophisticated and well informed approaches to teaching. This would be described by conceptual change theory as a discrepant event resulting in a person accommodating a reasonable alternative that eases their cognitive dissonance.

In 1972 biologists Stephen J Gould and Niles Eldridge proposed a theory of 'punctuated equilibrium' in which evolution was portrayed not as a slow gradual process over many years, but as periods of rapid change in response to an environmental stimulus, followed by periods of stasis in which the species accommodates and utilizes the change. We believe that teacher education programs may be conceptualized analogously. That is, teacher education programs intentionally create experiences which disrupt the well entrenched conceptions about teaching that candidates have developed over their lives, and seek to offer palatable alternatives that promote the development of the teacher in accelerated bursts. In short, teacher education may be thought of as a series of intentional discrepant events punctuating longer periods of reflection, practice and accommodation. However, in order to best design and create moments of disruption for the candidates, the teacher educators in the program require awareness of what qualities are being selected for in the admissions process as well as the patterns of conceptions of teaching in the candidates which are admitted to the program. We believe these conceptions can be disciplinary, dispositional and pedagogical.

By being more systematic in the information we seek to collect *and disseminate* as a result of the teacher education admissions processes, we increase the likelihood of two things. First, individuals can be selected with the apparent potential to become teachers because they have demonstrated some indication that they have dispositions which increase their chances of success in the profession, or at the least, in the education program. For example, selecting candidates that seek social justice in their practice, who see the value of inquiry in science learning, or who see teaching as more than power and knowledge transfer. Second, better information collected during admissions allows individuals within the teacher education program to gain insights into the prior learning and experiences of the entrants. This increases the chances that the program, or people in the program, can be informed regarding how to intentionally disrupt the prior learning of the candidates and offer them reasonable alternatives that increase their quality as teachers.

The idea of leaving the program open to change on the basis of information gathered during the admissions process is a scary and at first consideration, an unrealistic prospect. How difficult it is to foster positive change in teacher education programs is well documented (Levine 2006; Hoban 2005; Darling-Hammond 2006; etc.) and at the least it is time intensive and a process which requires much consultation and compromise. However, we are not suggesting that teacher education programs as a whole be reinvented on the basis of admissions data. Rather, as suggested by phenomenographic researchers Marton (1984) and Richardson (1999), we believe that the conceptions of the teacher candidates are unique but not infinitely so; that there are clusters of conceptions held by the education students entering the program. Thus, at a programmatic level, there needs to be an ability to use the data collected during admissions to

determine what is the conceptual emphasis of that cohort, and then modify the offerings accordingly.

As a final word we would like to return to the original question of this chapter – when does a person become a teacher and what does identifying that moment mean for learning to become? Believing that this teacher becoming only happens within the bounds of teacher education programs makes the difficult mandate of preparing people to become teachers that much harder. Prior learning influences a students' ability to learn within a teacher education program, and continues to influence them after they graduate and take on classrooms of their own. Gathering information about our prospective teachers during the admissions process illuminates candidate's academic/disciplinary potential, their preconceptions and their dispositions, and thus, increases the chances of selecting people who will become great teachers; people who will succeed in the programs they are seeking to enter. However, constructivism and conceptual change theory suggest that we also need to use the information gathered during admissions so that the prior conceptions of both the candidates <u>and the program</u> can be built upon, challenged and disrupted. When does a teacher become a teacher? In the disruptive moments which cause a person to develop ever more sophisticated and comprehensive understandings of the profession. These disruptions happen throughout a teachers' life, but it is the domain of teacher education programs to collect and disseminate the information necessary to *intentionally* create disruptions that further the development of each teacher.

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Teacher Becoming: The Significance of Difficult Moments

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Abstract

This paper engages with the *difficulties* in teaching; recognizing difficulty not as a lack of skill but rather, as integral to the becoming of teacher. By providing insight into difficulties or difficult moments, the broad aim is to enliven the conversation within Canadian teacher education; to enlist a more critical conception of teacher becoming, providing alternatives to constructs of "teacher development" that often remain steadfast and stifling in our institutions and normative discourses. Working with theories of poststructuralism and the psychoanalytic, I consider a particular difficult moment from a recent research project to consider the *aporia* (Derrida, 1990) as the space in becoming a teacher that requires an ethical response. The importance is to reconceptualise teacher "development" as a "becoming," that is, as a recursive engagement with difficulty, experienced only in relation to others, and with its greater responsibility being that of an ethical response to the self and to the other.

Education remains mired in discourses of best practices, skill-based development, standards and outcomes; teacher-centric activities that maintain assumptions of learning that remain dependent on the teacher (Britzman, 2003). Inherent within these notions are that teachers' work can be described as technical and that the subsequent project of education is about transmission of predetermined knowledge to its receptive students. Also inherent, is that when teaching is constructed as a technical endeavour, then becoming a teacher is positioned as determined by individual abilities and observable techniques; making implicit that teachers improve their practice through experience, and improve incrementally over time from beginner to expert. Indeed, efforts are being made within teacher education programs across Canada to work beyond developmental and technique-driven constructs through inquiry-driven courses, engagements with critical education literature, and a broadening of students' experiences through community-based practicum. However, because of the modernist discourses through which we (our institutions, their policies, our students, and the greater system of education) have been—and are continually—shaped, notions of developmentalism remain pervasive, silently steadfast, and forcefully normative within teacher education.

This perspective differs distinctly in that it engages with the *difficulties* in teaching; recognizing difficulty not as a lack of individual skill or as failed preparation or as an absence of experience, but rather, difficulty, I argue, is that which is integral to the becoming of teacher, the catalyst for judgment, ethical response, and responsibility. By providing insight into difficulty, this paper's broad aim is to enliven the conversation within Canadian teacher education in regards to teacher becoming, providing alternatives to linear, incremental constructs of "teacher development." This paper will consider a critical conception of teacher becoming, offering empirically-based understandings of teacher development as reciprocal, explicating what

difficult moments might teach us about the becoming of a teacher. Questions that guide this paper include: *When (and in what ways) does a person become a teacher? What does identifying that (those) moment(s) mean for learning to become? How might we reconceptualise the sites of teacher becoming?*

Working with theories of poststructuralism and drawing on the psychoanalytic, I will consider a particular moment from a recent research project. In analyzing this difficult moment, I draw on Derrida's (1990) *aporia*—what he describes as an irreconcilable decision—to consider the moment as productive and as the space for an ethical response to the other. Informed by Butler (1997, 2005), I extend this theorizing to consider the aporetic moment as an opportunity for an ethical response to the self. The purpose of the argument is to conceptualize teacher development as a becoming, as a recursive engagement with difficult moments and experienced only in relation to others. Importantly, this positions teaching and teacher becoming as an ethical response to the self and the other.

I will begin by describing the difficult moment that Joan[1], a research participant, shared in a conversation as part of a recent study. I will then use Joan's narrative as a touchstone to illustrate the theories in which this analysis is situated and to elucidate what I mean by the discourses of "teacher" and "teacher development." From there I will go on to describe from this poststructural perspective, how Joan's narrative can be theorized as an aporia which becomes useful to understanding the importance of difficulty in teaching and in the process of teacher becoming. In the final section of the paper, I will explicate the discussion on teacher becoming, making a more fulsome argument for a consideration of teacher becoming as recursive, occurring in relation with the other, and inevitably burdened with responsibility.

[1] "Joan" is a pseudonym.

A Routine Math Lesson Disrupted

During a conversation with a participant from a recent research study (Janzen, 2011), Joan (a teacher of about 7 years at the time) relayed a story from her first year of teaching. We had been talking about events that had influenced us as teachers and Joan described a moment that she called "significant." She introduced the incident by describing the moment as a "little example" and as "sound[ing] kind of silly," but she also described the moment as "pivotal" and as a "major moment in her learning." Joan explained that she was preparing to conduct a routine math lesson. The activity was something that she had learned from her cooperating teacher when she was a student teacher and had since implemented in her own grade three classroom on a regular basis. Joan described the scenario:

> And again, at that time, I'm not really thinking about, you know, who these kids are and what do I believe about these kids…. Not really thinking about that…and there's this little boy, Mitchell, and I started doing [the math lesson] and I looked over at him and his face was like he was going to start to cry. And I looked at him and I thought, "Oh my God!" because that was me! That was me in grade four!...And here, now I am the teacher, I'm in the power position, I'm sitting at the front of the classroom …and I was like, "Oh my god! …Why am I doing this? What's my purpose? …Why am I here? Why am I doing this? "[2]

In this moment we hear Joan describe her preparations for a math lesson; a routine lesson using content that she felt was prescribed and sanctioned by the curriculum, utilizing a technique that was modeled, and therefore authorized by a former cooperating teacher, and neatly executing a variation of this lesson each day. Joan has been delivering this curriculum content through a

[2] Part of Joan's narrative was also used in a recently published article (Janzen, 2013).

recommended technique and, up until that day, the students had been compliant receptors. However, on this day, the introduction of the activity is interrupted by Mitchell, who begins to cry, and Joan presumes his reaction is due to the anxiety he is feeling about the activity. The event interrupts Joan's lesson and she is taken aback by Mitchell's tears, triggering Joan to recall her own experiences as a student, her feelings of anxiety and perhaps, humiliation. She is shocked and asks herself what she is doing. Joan had been doing this activity all year, performing—or "doing" teacher—according to the ways she had been trained, and yet, it was not until faced with Mitchell's tears that she considers, "Why am I doing this? What's my purpose? Why am I here?" This difficult moment interrupts the lesson, disrupts the routine, and incites Joan to (re)consider her understandings—not just of what she was doing—but of what means to be and become a teacher.

A Discursive Understanding of Teacher Identity

Drawing on the work of Judith Butler in regards to identity formation and subjection, as well as Deborah Britzman, particularly in regards to notions of teacher becoming, the theories of poststructuralism call into question the reliability of language and the fixity of the individual or "self", while attempting to attend to the relationships between power and knowledge (Weedon, 1987). Poststructuralism attends carefully to discourse, which is considered "a structuring principal in society, in social institutions, modes of thought and individual subjectivity" (Weedon, 1987, p. 41). Discourse, in a Foucauldian (1969/1989) sense, is considered a practice, an understanding and acceptance of assumptions existing within social, cultural, and institutional regimes of truth. These discourses, which are socially constructed, manifest in everyday knowledge and practices, and are treated as natural, legitimate and as a "truth." Because of the

normalization, discourses constitute not only a truth that appears natural, but a way of being in relation to that truth. That is, the discourses constitute the individual and authorize particular ways of being. When discourses become dominant—because they seem natural while carrying legitimacy and authority—they also become inhibiting. In other words, because the discourses act as prescribed norms, they limit what is possible.

For poststructuralists, a critical examination of dominant discourses becomes a means by which to consider the workings of power, the ways in which power circulates, and how power constitutes discourses, constructing and inhibiting the subject. This engagement allows for critical contemplations of that which has become normative and through what discursive mechanisms. Therefore, this becomes an opportunity not only to understand the workings of power and how we might consider these dominant (and normative) discourses differently, but also how we "contribute to dominance in spite of our liberatory intentions" (Lather, 1991). Thus, this poststructural critique is not simply a criticism of "other" ways of thinking, but an engagement with and consideration of our own roles in underwriting and preserving hegemonic and normative discourses.

In order to illustrate the ways in which discourses can become norms and normalizing, I will consider developmental notions of becoming a teacher. I choose developmentalism as the backdrop for this engagement, because it is a social construction that has pervaded educational discourses for decades, becoming the threads in the fabric of schooling and of education. I do not aim to position developmentalism as the dichotomous other, but rather invite us to consider how we, as teachers and teacher educators, are in constant engagement with it, reifying and reconstituting developmentalism discursively. Thus, we do not exist outside of the construct of

developmentalism; it is pervasive, normalized and reified by and within education's institutions and the people within them.

Broadly speaking, developmental psychology emerged from within the modernist era in which there was an emphasis on narratives of truth, objectivity, science and reason (Burman, 1994) in an effort to regulate and control the population through individual classification and surveillance (Burman, 1994; Popkewitz, 1997). Situated within the era of Enlightenment, with its appeal to reason and the allure of science, developmentalism became legitimized. Proliferating within places where scientists had access to great numbers of exposed populations, such as mental hospitals, prisons, schools and nurseries, developmental psychology began creating standardizations and normalizations that led to the production of notions of development that became naturalized. Consider the very structure of and practices within the education system: grade levels determined by age, special education designations and classifications of children, early years reading programs, standardized and intelligence testing, and preschool "readiness" rhetoric, to name but a few. This is the context in which we work to critically engage teacher candidates in thinking and learning about education.

Mirroring and inextricably embedded in the education system, as well as due to education's own academic insecurities and subsequent seduction of science, it is not surprising that developmentalism pervades understandings and assumptions of teacher development. The notion of teacher development as progressing on a continuum has become normalized and legitimated through and within institutions; through the structures, policies and techniques of teacher education programs, teacher supervision procedures, and in-service teacher professional development. "Teacher development" implicitly suggests a continuum of progression, a linear and accumulative experience, existing in as a time-bound event from novice to expert.

It is important to note that developmental psychology has been criticized for privileging Western and Euro-centric assumptions, focusing on cognitive development over other domains, favoring the rational, and focusing on the individual void of context and culture (Burman, 1994; Walkerdine, 1993). Although a full review of the critiques of developmentalism is neither the purpose nor possible within the parameters of this paper, it is noteworthy that criticism of developmental psychology's pervasive presence within education has been emerging for years; for example, within early childhood education (Burman, 1994; Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 2007; Janzen, 2008; Mac Naughton, 2005), youth studies (Lesko, 2001), and in special education (Thomas & Loxley, 2007). In addition, many educational theorists (including those not identifying as poststructuralist) have enlisted arguments that are not premised on developmentalism such as Egan (2005), Gardner (1993), and Noddings (1984) to name but a few. Thus, developmentalism has been broadly critiqued and, over the decades, educational theorists have offered other viable perspectives. So although developmentalism may not necessarily dominate the premise with which we *intend* to situate our teacher education programs and courses, I argue that the discourse of developmentalism remains pervasive in teacher education, and that this is due in part to it pervasiveness in education, writ large. It has a powerful, yet naturalized hold on the minds of—and in the discursive structures that surround—teacher candidates, teacher educators, host teachers, school principals and the general public.

Teacher Identity: Who Do You Think You Are?

Contemplating the identity of the teacher is an important exercise. To consider the identity of teacher as a social construction foregrounds the prevailing discourses of who it is we think teachers are, as well as who we think teachers should be. As Britzman (1992) explains:

> Our identities, overdetermined by time, place, and sociality, are lived through the discourses of knowledge we employ to make sense of who we are, who we are not, and who we can become. Identity, then, always signifies relationships to the other and consequently …must be negotiated. (p. 27)

Once we understand that teacher identities—like other identities—are social constructions constituted by discourse (Butler, 1997), and are always in relation to the other, we are able to realize a greater sense of agency in our understandings of the identity of teacher. It is within this poststructural dynamic—between the constructions of teacher identity and the desire of the subject to be recognizable as "teacher," that this analysis is situated. Because the teaching subject is situated within an already-determined discourse of "teacher," to counter such hegemonic discourses—that is, to be "teacher" differently—is a social negotiation, requiring a recognition of teacher becoming as socially constructed, negotiated, and a contradictory experience of identity formation.

We can see these discursive movements and tensions illustrated in Joan's story. Joan conveys the ways in which she reiterates the norms of teacher, complying with curriculum, pedagogy and pre-established routine seemingly without question. "I'm not really thinking about, you know, who these kids are and what do I believe about these kids…. Not really thinking about that." The discourses of how to be "teacher" precede her; it is *always already* established (Foucault, 1976/1990), and subsequently constitute her into "being teacher" in a particular way. Joan, in her efforts to be recognizable as a teacher within the discursive norms, delivers the predetermined lesson without considering how it reflects her understandings of who she is as a teacher, who she believes the students are, or what she considers the project of

education to be. Thus, Joan performs "teacher," reenacting the normative discourses of being in an attempt to be recognizable as a teaching subject.

Conceptualizing Joan's Becoming

The moment described by Joan illustrates a moment of disruption and difficulty in becoming a teacher. Difficult moments such as these—students crying, wincing, mocking, rolling their eyes, grumbling, defying, and swearing—occur regularly in schools. Teachers, too, yell, argue, shame, worry, reprimand, and cry. Although there are also many positive moments in schools such as laughter, care, and enjoyment, it is the difficult moments—the ones that weigh on teachers at the end of the day, the ones that are most suppressed and negated—that require our attention. Difficult moments challenge the cultural myths (Britzman, 2003) of teachers. These myths perpetuate deceptive beliefs that "everything depends on the teacher," that "teachers are self-made," and that "teachers are experts" (p. 7). Teachers cannot maintain this mythical status as experts and as those upon whom the duty of education rests (nor is that the goal). Yet how are teachers prepared for the moments when they are challenged by students who yell, cry or disengage; when teachers react inappropriately; or when they simply do not know what to do? In these moments, when teachers are at a loss they risk recognizability to others, but also to themselves. These myths, the discourses of teachers-as-knowers, inhibit conversations to the contrary and stifle discussions about difficulty. How might we reconceptualise difficult moments and difficult in teaching, to engage more critically in what it means to become a teacher, and importantly, to become a teacher differently?

Joan's Responsibility to the Other

Derrida's (1990) notion of *aporia* and Edgoose's (2001) consideration of aporia is a means to understand ethical teaching. Aporia, originating from the Greeks, means puzzle. Derrida's articulation of justice, in his essay *Force of Law*, explains the aporia of law and justice, arguing that "law (*droit*) is not justice….Law is the element of calculation…but justice is incalculable" (p. 947). Derrida's argument suggests that whereas the law is a calculable application of a rule or a universal norm, justice is always singular, a particular response to the other. Derrida articulates the tensions between the universality of law and the particularity of justice:

> An address is always singular, idiomatic, and justice, as law (*droit*), seems always to suppose the generality of a rule, a norm or a universal imperative. How are we to reconcile the act of justice that must always concern singularity, individuals, irreplaceable groups and lives, the other or myself *as* the other, in a unique situation, with rule, norm, value or even if this generality prescribes a singular application in each case? (p. 949)

For Derrida, justice can only be achieved through a particularity of a response in the face of the other and in the language of the other. Yet, paradoxically, because of the problems with language and its incessant failures to represent what is intended, justice is always impossible. Thus, the aporetic experience—the difficult moment in which one is faced with the irreconcilable decision—is the moment that, in contemplating a particular response to the other within the universality of laws or norms, always refuses closure. Yet, the aporetic moment remains "the condition of all possible justice" (p. 949). Thus, for Derrida, responsibility to the other is enacted within the aporia, within this "irreconcilable tension between the universal and the particular;

between the legal and the ethical; between law (*droit*) and justice" (Edgoose, 2001, p. 128). The moment of difficulty in *deciding* how to respond, of weighing the particulars in the face of the other, *is* the moment of responsibility to the other.

In articulating the aporia of justice, Derrida (1990) explains three aporias: the aporia of suspension, the aporia of undecidability, and the aporia of urgency. Justice, according to Derrida, can only come from the disruption, when one has to enact, what he terms "fresh judgment" (p. 961). This occurs within the aporia when decisions are suspended in order to make an interpretation; abiding by the law while also interpreting it. The aporia of undecidability is the second aporia of justice. This aporia is not merely a representation of the tensions associated with making a decision, "not merely the oscillation or the tension between two decisions" (p. 963), but rather, it is an obligation to respond, "to give [oneself] up to the impossible decision" (p. 963). To act justly is not simply a calculated application of a universal response, but rather requires an engagement with undecidability. Finally, the third aporia is that of urgency: "ethical decisions cannot wait—a decision *has* to be made" (Edgoose, 2001, p. 129; italics in the original). One must decide and knowing that a just decision is impossible, the aporias of suspension, undecidability and urgency becomes the moment in which responsibility—what Derrida terms the possibility for justice—exists.

Therefore, one's responsibility to the other does not reside in the *outcome* of the decision but rather within the aporetic moment itself, within the contemplation, the undecidability and a consideration of the particular in the face of the other. The difficult moment then is determined by the aporias of interruption and its suspense of certainty, the undecideability of a response and one's contemplation of a decision, and the urgency that requires a response. These moments are not defined by certainty or conviction, but rather by contemplation of an ethical response to the

particularity of the other. Thus, in Joan's case, when faced with the crying boy, she is faced with a decision as to how to proceed. She is required to respond in some way and within this deliberation is the moment in which Joan can respond ethically to the other. Joan's responsibility is not the application of the general rule but the pursuit of a just decision that must be particular to the other. The outcomes to any decisions made are precarious and unknowable in advance and potentially, never known at all. That the lesson is interrupted by the crying boy and the teacher's response is suspended, undecided, and urgent illustrates an aporetic moment in which Joan must demonstrate her responsibility to the other.

Joan's Responsibility to the Self

The teaching subject's desire to be recognizable as a teacher is exploited "by the desire for existence" (Butler, 1997, p. 21) and thus, illustrates the ways in which the discursive norms of being teacher act on and within the teaching subject. What strikes me as significant is that within the aporetic moment, when the lesson is interrupted and Joan is jarred into responding, the normative discourses of being teacher are momentarily disrupted. Therefore, although the subject was performing teacher as constituted by the normative discourses (Butler, 1997), (that is, implementing the lesson as prescribed and as authorized in being taught to her), the emotional disturbance disrupts what was routine. Joan explains, "I was just doing what I thought I should do." The universal application of the lesson that she had been taught by a previous cooperating teacher and which she routinely implemented was unsettled. The aporetic moment creates a space for the teaching subject to consider her own becoming as a teacher; urging Joan to ask herself, "Why am I doing this?...Why am I here?" Within this aporetic moment, where the teacher is required to respond, when the response is both uncertain, unknowable and yet urgent,

there is a seemingly profound effect on Joan and her own understandings of teacher becoming. It is here that Joan is required to demonstrate a responsibility to the self.

Britzman (2003) explains that, "learning to teach is a process of social negotiation" (p. 31), and yet, it is also a negotiation with one's "self." Joan's account within the aporetic moment describes not only the ethical response to the other, but illustrates the difficulty of and the tension within the teaching subject's struggles to become. It is in this moment where Joan is suddenly aware of the subjective forces upon her, and attempts to become teacher differently, if only momentarily (Janzen, 2013). Within the aporetic moment and in the subject's attempt for an ethical response to the other, there is also an attempt to become differently. This is the subject's efforts to enact its responsibility to the self, to account for oneself (Butler, 2005). Thus, within the aporetic moment there is seemingly a moment of possibility, a space to become teacher differently from the discursive norms that come before, that always already constitute the teaching subject into being.

Teacher Becoming as Recursive

Importantly, Joan's memories in her retelling of the story, although an attempt to account for the self, are inherently flawed and disoriented (Butler, 2005). As Butler explains, these accounts are subject to perspective, time, and discursive norms. The account, whether "truthful" or not is not in question and frankly, seems irrelevant. Rather, the accounting is creative, summoning its "meaning … after the fact" (Britzman, 2006, p. 107), a narrative that ricochets through memory and the unconscious; a fiction loaded with desire. Joan draws into the narrative a memory from her own childhood—"That was me in grade four!"—and in that moment remembers with incredulity that she is re-enacting her own childhood experiences. That is, Joan

perceives that she is doing to Mitchell what was done to her as a student. She catches herself oppressing another; a déjà vu of her own educational biography (Britzman, 2006). Thus, the event and the disrupted memory of anxiety, when replayed, are given new meaning after the fact.

There is something about the aporetic moment that resonates with Joan. It is not merely significant for her the day that it occurred. For some reason, this moment has lingered six years later. What is it about this moment that allows it—compels it even—to linger? As Joan describes the math lesson, Mitchell's tears and her surprise, she recalls how she considered not just what she was doing in that moment, but who she was as a young child, who she is "now" as a teacher, and who she hopes to be or become. The event is an illustration of "how the encrypted memories we hold of violence, lost ideals, and betrayals are acted out through pedagogy, memories that appear absent but take up an uncanny presence in our classrooms" (Salvio, 2007, p. 19). Joan is upset by the anxious memory, worried that she harming a child and experiences great angst about what she is doing—and who she is being and becoming—as a teacher. These emotional reactions and stark realizations weigh on Joan. She describes it as a "wake up moment," a representation—although fictional and tenuous—of "who" she is trying to be and to become. Thus, the memory of this event haunts the subject while conveying its desire.

In the story that Joan tells, we see the past, present and future interwoven, colliding into that event, reflected on and retold. The event occurs in the "now" (as she tells it in the study), the "then" (in the memory from her first year teaching,) and the time before (in the memory from her childhood), while also inciting the future (in the desire to become differently). It is a tangle of realization, anxiety, memory and desire erupting to the fore and becomes a metaphor for the tensions and unevenness in Joan's becoming. Thus, becoming turns out to be situated simultaneously in the present, the past and the future; influenced by the eruption of memory and

uninvited educational biography, exposed through its relation with others, and narrated in the hopes of giving it (new) meaning. Joan tells—and perhaps has been telling—this story for six years since the event occurred, conveying an arguably minor incident that holds the power to disrupt the present, recall the past, and projects itself into the future. Teacher becoming, therefore, a recursive moment, manifests through the subject's memory and narration, and conveys the subject's tensions, faults, and desires.

The aporetic moment illustrates becoming as occurring disjointedly—out of synch with time. Joan experienced this moment in her first year teaching and yet she continues to revisit it, explaining it as "significant." Joan retells it and in each retelling she disrupts and rejects the discursive norms again. That is, in each retelling, she reasserts her desire to be and become a teacher in a particular way. This recursivity is important and reflects teacher becoming not in a linear relationship with time, but as a relationship with a particular moment, repeated and recursive. Teacher becoming conceptualized as such "conveys the simultaneity of time, place, events, and the meanings we give to them" (Britzman, 2003, p. 69). Importantly, within this moment, the normative discourses of being a teacher are disrupted and rejected, if only temporarily. For example, after telling the story, Joan says that she does not want to be the teacher at the front of the class "with all the power," transmitting curriculum to children, holding all the answers, while reenacting and reliving her own educational biography. Thus, teacher becoming is inevitably situated in relation to the self and others; being with and responding to others; inherently fragile and unpredictable.

Teacher Becoming and Responsibility

Provoked by a young boy's tears and a childhood memory, the discursive norms of "teacher" are suddenly exposed. Thus, the recounted event brings into relief the powerful discourses of subjection, while revealing for Joan a realization of her enactment of the norms and her simultaneous resistance to them. When the lesson is interrupted, Joan is harkened back to her own childhood as a student and recognizes herself in Mitchell. Joan exclaims:

> That was me in grade four…and here, now I am the teacher; I'm in the power position; I'm sitting at the front of the classroom on my little stool with the answer key in my hand and I was like, oh my god!...I'm doing exactly what made me feel like this big.

For Joan, a distressing recollection of her own childhood anxiety, where the memory of herself in what she perceived as a similar situation to the now-crying Mitchell, shocks her into a reconsideration of what she is doing, who she is as a teacher, and who she wants to become. It is within the aporetic moment that Joan realizes—and is forced to enact—a responsibility to the self and to the other. Within the difficult moment, when the plan is disrupted and Joan is compelled to make a decision, she must do so in consideration of the particularity of the moment—of the boy, of the other children and of herself—in order for her to demonstrate an ethical response (Derrida 1990.)

Teachers experience countless difficult moments with others: students who defy, ignore, shout, cry, argue, and wail; and other adults who judge, command and complain. These moments come and go, some retold later and then forgotten, some agonized over, while others remain simply flashes of occurrence in a teacher's day filled with each other's emotional dramas, decisions and damages. This analysis of Joan's narrative is an attempt to illustrate the complexities of what it means to be and become teacher. Situated within an enduring subjection

of normative discourses, being and becoming a teaching subject is a constant performance of repetition and of risk. The performance—in negotiation with the subject (Butler, 2005)—allows one to "be" in relation to the normative discourses, necessary in order for the subject to be recognizable. The risk however, is at least two-fold: in becoming (differently) the subject is at risk of failing to be recognizable. That is, if one does not comply with the normative discourses of becoming a teacher, one risks both being seen as a teacher, while simultaneously and paradoxically, compliance with the normative discourses may risk being able to account for oneself. As Butler (2005) explains:

> …self-questioning of this sort involves putting oneself at risk, imperiling the very possibility of being recognized by others, since to question the norms of recognition that govern what I might be, to ask what they leave out, what they might be compelled to accommodate, is, in relation to the present regime, to risk unrecognizability as a subject or at least to become an occasion for posting the questions of who one is (or can be) and whether or not one is recognizable. (p. 23)

Thus, becoming induces anxiety, a fear of failing to be recognizable and/or the fear of failing to account for one's self. As Butler (2002) asks, "Who can I become in such a world where the meanings and limits of the subject are set out in advance for me?" (p. 12). This, too, is Joan's question and the responsibility of the teaching subject in its own becoming.

Difficulty as the Teacher's Burden

As Britzman (2003) explains, the role and identity of a teacher are two different things; while the former speaks to function, the latter speaks to "investments and commitments… what one feels" (p. 29). Yet, teacher education (and education) too often remains preoccupied with

how to "do" teacher rather than how to "be" a teacher. The privileging of technique, best practices, strategies, and competencies continually (re)positions the teacher—fixed and individualized—at the centre of the project of education, constructing teaching's end as already determined. However, as teachers, and as Joan's story illustrates, we never know where our lessons end up, what it does to others, or what it invokes. "We rarely know how our lessons are received or what lost loves, desires, or ideals they will summon up for our students" (Salvio, 2007, p. 33). Reactions to lessons remain unknown and unknowable, our experiences with the other is always undefinable and unpredictable, yet, as teachers, being in relation to the other is the only way we exist.

Although always subjected by and within the normative discourses of being, the aporetic moment becomes the space for the teaching subject to engage in an ethical response, unknown in advance and indeterminate. In this way, becoming is the "an uneasy practice of repetition and risks, compelled yet incomplete, wavering on the horizon of social being (Butler, 1997, p. 30). The uneasiness is experienced as interruptions, recursive engagements with significant events, eruptions of memories, and ensuing stories that attempt to represent and re-present who it is one is. Joan's narrative is a retelling of an event from her first year of teaching, retold and reimagined to reflect how she has become/is becoming something in particular, and thus illustrates a conceptualization of teacher becoming is disjointed and recursive. In these moments, the teaching subject is ethically exposed; contemplating not just what she is doing to the child, but concerned with who she is—and is becoming—as a teacher, urgently attempting to account for herself. "Suddenly, I'm looking at this little person…I'm looking at him and I'm just, like, oh my God! What am I doing?" In this instant, Joan is ultimately responsible, recognizing the presence of the other, literally "looking at him," and in his presence, is required to make an irreconcilable

decision, requiring an ethical response, one that demonstrates responsibility to both the other and to the self.

It is telling to note the hesitancy with which Joan told me her story. She was embarrassed by the story, laughed awkwardly, and worried about the judgment her story might invoke. Perhaps she was anxious about being judged on the lesson she chose, or the perception that it was her fault that Mitchell was anxious, or that she did not know what to do when he cried. After all, the discourses of "teacher" that precede Joan do not allow for mistakes or uncertainty or failure. Subsequently, difficult moments such as these burden teachers, invoking guilt, shame and anxiety. And yet, it seems that this instance of difficulty—as it reverberated through Joan's educational biography and desire to be differently—was an incredibly important event in her becoming as a teacher. Joan's moment of difficulty—invoking disruption, uncertainty and an urgency to respond—incited an ethical response to the other and to the self, thus illustrating the ways in which difficult moments enliven the essence of being and becoming a teacher.

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Discursive Productions of Teaching and Learning Through Inquiry: Novice Teachers Reflect on Becoming a Teacher and Secondary Mathematics Teacher Education

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Abstract

Reconceptualizing mathematics teacher education means studying the complex processes of being and becoming a teacher from multiple perspectives. This chapter reports on research tracing novice teachers' constructions of identity and agency through an understanding of their first few years 'becoming' a mathematics teacher and the role of secondary mathematics teacher education in this process. In particular, the theme of this chapter is the role played by the discursive drive for teaching and learning through inquiry (TLTI) in the process of becoming a teacher. Using discourse analysis informed by Bourdieu's social field theory, four threads of normativity are teased out of participants' experiences of teaching and learning through inquiry. In this chapter it is proposed that the four threads create a tightly woven network of discursive relations that structure the social space(s) of mathematics classrooms, producing normative notions of the good mathematics teacher as well as the processes for being and becoming one.

Research indicates that many students enter a teacher education program with already well-conceived notions of the kinds of teachers they want to become and the roles teacher educators should play in getting them there (Britzman, 2003; Phelan & Sumsion, 2008; Ritchie & Wilson, 2000). Emerging professional identities are closely tied to prospective and novice teachers' previous experiences as students, including their epistemological images of mathematics content knowledge (Cooney & Shealy, 1997; Manouchehri, 1998; Muis, 2004), their pedagogical images of "the good teacher" (McWilliam, 2008; Moore, 2004; Walls, 2010; Weber & Mitchell, 1995), and their stance on conformity with institutional structures and school regulations (Brown & McNamara, 2005, 2011; Nolan, 2010; Sumara, Davis & Iftody, 2008). Further, research suggests that prospective and novice mathematics teachers are embedded within an 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' ideology as a response to new pedagogical approaches and techniques (Appelbaum, 2008; Lerman, 2001; Nolan, 2008).

Entering teacher education programs with these already well-established notions of what it means to be a teacher makes one wonder when, where, and how the processes of 'becoming' (a teacher) are best studied. It is suggested that being and becoming a teacher should be studied from multiple perspectives; that is, from the perspective of those who aspire to be admitted into a teacher education program; those who are currently enrolled in a teacher education program (prospective teachers in university courses and school field experiences), and recent graduates of a teacher education program (novice teachers in their first few years of teaching). Young & Erikson (2011) write about these perspectives as "stories of *imagining* ourselves as teachers, *becoming* teachers, and *being* teachers" (p. 122). Reflecting on such stories as three distinct phases, however, could paint a misleading picture that the process of becoming has definitive

beginning and ending points. The research discussed in this chapter confirms instead that the process of becoming a teacher is indeed an extended and complex process.

Danielewicz (2001) "regards 'becoming a teacher' as an identity forming process whereby individuals define themselves and are viewed by others as teachers" (p. 3). Similarly, daPonte & Chapman (2008) conceptualize prospective and novice mathematics teachers' identity as "not only about what it means for one to do, know, learn, and teach mathematics but what it means to view oneself as a professional teacher and how one sees one's ongoing development as a teacher of mathematics" (p. 242). Embracing the complexity and volatility of the concepts of identity and agency means understanding that teachers "are not unitary, rational and autonomous individuals freely able to choose new ways of viewing and doing [and teaching] mathematics at whim" (Klein, 1999, p. 86). School discursive practices produce and reproduce acceptable (often normalized) notions of the good mathematics teacher, thereby influencing the processes of being and becoming a mathematics teacher.

In short, becoming a teacher can be a slippery concept to trace. When novice teachers in this research study were asked if they were "still becoming a teacher," one participant in her fourth year as a teacher responded:

> I think so. Yeah, like I think I'm getting better each year. I think I'm learning more. This is the third time I've done [this topic] and each time I think they're hopefully understanding it more and I'm trying to… yeah, do more inquiry, do deeper questions, less close-ended, more open-ended. Like I think I'm getting there, yeah. [Christy, interview #1, p. 17]

The discussion that follows in this chapter reports on research that traces novice teachers' constructions of identity and agency through an understanding of their first few years 'becoming' a mathematics teacher and the role of secondary mathematics teacher education in this process.

Context of Research Study

The research data and analysis for this chapter is drawn form a larger research program[1] which seeks to reconceptualize mathematics teacher education by embracing the belief that there are more difficult questions to ask in teacher education than those which can be readily answered through a collection of teaching techniques. The significance of the research program does not rest on coming to a consensus on recommended techniques for 'improving' mathematics teacher education theory and practice. Its task "is not to seek truth or find a final resolution, but rather to ask how the discursive formulations have taken the shape that they have" (Brown and England, 2005, p. 449). In other words, the research program asks how poststructuralist concepts of identity and agency can open spaces for imagining multiple ways of being and becoming teacher, learner, inquirer.

The larger research program has a diversified focus on three key interacting dimensions, or perspectives, of mathematics teacher education—that of prospective teachers, novice teachers, and teacher educators. This chapter is limited in scope by focusing on the novice teacher perspective, or what is referred to as the retrospective dimension of this mathematics teacher education research program. The retrospective dimension primarily asks the question of how novice teachers experience and live out their sense of agency and identity formation when immersed in the powerful discourses of school mathematics.

[1] The research program, entitled *Reconceptualizing secondary mathematics teacher education: Critical and reflexive perspectives*, is supported by a 3-year Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Insight Grant.

Theoretical Framework

Reconceptualizing mathematics teacher education means rethinking the dominant conceptual framework for questions of how, why, and what could be in teacher education. To this end, the research challenges and disrupts traditional discourses of teacher education programs and associated field experience, tracing the intersections of identity, agency and reflexivity in mathematics teacher education using Bourdieu's sociological theory (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). The key concepts of Bourdieu's social field theory (such as habitus, field, capital, and doxa) confirm the complexities of becoming a teacher by focusing on the dynamic relationships between structure and agency within a social practice, pointing to the promise and possibility of social change through critical reflexivity. Such an approach highlights the network of relations and discursive practices that support (and (re)produce) traditional practices in the teaching of mathematics, acknowledging the normalized practices and dispositions of schooling as strong forces in shaping teacher identity and agency (Nolan, 2012).

Research Design and Methods

The research design for the study informing this paper involved working with several novice teachers (with 1-7 years teaching experience), who are graduates of the University of Regina's secondary mathematics teacher education program. Specifically, the novice teachers selected for the study had been students in the researcher's curriculum courses when they were in university. Data was collected through an online survey, 2 semi-structured interviews with each of ten (10) participants and three focus group discussions with small groups of participants. Research questions focussed on teachers' experiences in the first few years of teaching, their

beliefs on teaching and learning mathematics (including especially inquiry-based approaches), their perceptions of mathematics curriculum renewal, and their views on the role of teacher education programs in becoming a mathematics teacher. Examples of research questions are:

- If you were to be enrolled in your teacher education program all over again, describe what experiences/activities/theories you would want to be available and/or emphasized throughout that program. Were these available and/or emphasized when you were a student at the University of Regina?
- How 'empowered' do you feel to map out your own way of being/becoming a (good) teacher? Can you describe any particular structures or routines (of school, subject, etc.) that provide boundaries around (or limitations to) this 'becoming' process?
- What have been the major challenges for you in this reformed curriculum with a focus on inquiry? What do *you* mean by 'inquiry' or 'teaching through inquiry' (or 'inquiry-based learning')?
- Can you comment on how (or if) personal and professional discourses intersect in forming your teacher space (teacher identity)?
- Describe the role of 'others' (other teachers, mathematics consultants, curriculum policy documents, textbooks, administrators, etc.) in your decision-making processes as a teacher.

In essence, the questions focus attention on novice teachers' perceptions of the many powerful discourses of school mathematics, including discursive productions (and reproductions) of teaching and learning through inquiry. In this chapter, it is useful to view discourse "as the ways that an issue or topic is 'spoken of', through, for example, speech, texts, writing and practice" (Carabine, 2001, p. 268). Or, according to MacLure (2003), discourses can be thought of as "practices for producing meaning, forming subjects and regulating conduct within particular

societies and institutions, at particular historical times" (p. 175). As it happens, the production of one normative discourse in/of learning mathematics (for example, learning key mathematics procedures and rules) can construct a particular 'truth' that works to invalidate (even erase) other discourses in/of learning mathematics (for example, learning mathematics through inquiry-based approaches).

Critically analyzing the discourses 'spoken of' in novice teacher survey, interview, and focus group data provides insights into the ideologies and power relations involved in the discursive practices of schools and teacher education. In this research program, critical discourse analysis is shaped and informed by Bourdieu's social field theory (specifically, the concepts of capital and doxa) to analyze the shifting network of relations between social practices and social fields, with an eye to understanding relationships between structures and teacher identity/agency (Bourdieu, 1977) in becoming a teacher.

Discussion of Data

This paper focuses on one particular theme woven throughout the data as threads identified in the interviews with the research participants. The theme is that of the role played by the discursive drive for teaching and learning through inquiry (TLTI) in the process of becoming a teacher; the threads are those of the patterns or relations expressed by participants as they shared their experiences on teaching and learning through inquiry.

It is worth elaborating on the genesis of this particular research theme and threads of my data, which are visibly apparent in my research questions and also signify my discursive space as a teacher educator. For several years, I have worked closely with secondary mathematics interns as their faculty advisor, while simultaneously conducting self-study research into my practice—

in particular, the role of university courses and internship on the theory-practice transitions of prospective teachers. By design, that research has been studying the role of inquiry teaching and learning in prospective teachers' internship classrooms in their processes of becoming a teacher. Identified as a pattern in my research with prospective teachers over the years, interns would respond that their internship classroom was not their own; it belonged to the cooperating teacher and thus her/his style of teaching had to be honoured. As one intern noted, "… she's been teaching for a long time and she knows the best way to do it. I just don't think I can go against that right now" (Nolan, 2008, p. 169). This (apparent) voluntary relinquishing of individual agency in the internship classroom made me acutely aware of the limitations on prospective teachers in their processes of 'becoming' while in internship. Bullock and Russell (2010) argue that the field experience is "an inherently problematic construct that is unlikely to encourage teacher candidates to develop pedagogies that promote more productive learning for students" (p. 91) and that, as teacher educators, we need to "accept field experience for what it is and what it cannot be" (p. 98). My interns often assured me that things would be different once they got their own classrooms. Part of the impetus, then, for this research was to follow these prospective teachers into their own classrooms as teachers; to study how/if teacher agency featured prominently in becoming a teacher in the first few years with "one's own classroom". What I have come to realize is that teaching through inquiry represents a significant disruption (rupture?) in the normative practices of mathematics classrooms. Inquiry, featured as it is in secondary mathematics curriculum renewal in the province of Saskatchewan and throughout Canada, can no longer be viewed through the lens of "just another classroom tool". Teaching and learning through inquiry has become a defining philosophical direction of reform movements as well as a coordinate system through which 'good' teaching is mapped.

The pervasiveness and drive for teaching and learning through inquiry (TLTI) through the eyes and ears of public discourse is a controversial pedagogical paradigm, partly because it is positioned in stark contrast to that of direct teaching, or what Skovsmose (2008) refers to as the "exercise paradigm":

> First, the teacher presents a new topic, which may include a careful exposition of some details… Second, the students are asked to solve particular exercises… Third, a part of the lesson is reserved for the teacher to control the students' possible learning and understanding. Exercises are often then checked and worked out at the blackboard. (p. 167)

Regrettably, the exercise paradigm is normalized in mathematics classrooms as the approach that is most effective at covering maximum curriculum content in a minimum period of time (Nolan, 2012). According to Boaler (2008), traditional teaching leads to passive learning: "Students taught through passive approaches follow and memorize methods instead of learning to inquire, ask questions, and solve problems" (p. 40). The paradigm shift to inquiry-based classrooms demands a tolerance for ambiguity, uncertainty, and negotiation—skills not generally acquired through years of traditional school mathematics experiences. Thus, in the context of mathematics teacher education and beyond, there are numerous challenges and complexities involved in inspiring prospective and novice teachers to embrace inquiry-based pedagogies while also seeking to deconstruct what are perceived as firmly entrenched stereotypes and ideas about teaching (Weber & Mitchell, 1995).

While the notion of an inquiry-based classroom (what it looks and feels like) is interpreted in diverse ways across a variety of contexts, there are a few distinguishing features common to most. In general, inquiry-based pedagogy is an alternative view of teaching and learning based primarily on theories of constructivism and characterized by classrooms where the focus is on

constructing mathematical understanding through student investigation, collaboration, and communication (Cheeseman, 2008; Leikin & Rota, 2006).

In relation to my research study, teaching and learning through inquiry (TLTI) has become a fitting thread to weave into my research conversations since it reflects a philosophical shift in what it means to teach and learn mathematics. As well, it focuses attention on a parallel social-constructivist thread of teacher education programs where prospective teachers are themselves encouraged to 'become' (teachers) through inquiry; that is, “to become lifelong learners, constantly inquiring into their beliefs and practices with respect to teaching and learning” (Beck & Kosnik, 2006, p. 53).

With the deliberate teasing out of inquiry threads from the fabric of novice teachers’ mathematics classrooms as a focus for this chapter, it is worthwhile sharing what novice teachers in this study mean by TLTI. Responding to how they define inquiry or what it means to teach through inquiry, participants shared the following:

> Posing a question and having students come up with a process to find it without giving the process, without saying step one, step two. Yeah, it’s posing a question. [Christy, interview #1, p. 9]

> Well, for me just to teach through inquiry-, like… would be to give them the tools that they need, but then not assist them in the way-, I could be there as a guide, but they would have to come up with the process on their own, using what they already know. [Toni, interview #1, p. 19]

> For me it's trying to help them figure things out instead of me just telling them what the answers are, not giving them entirely structured, I guess, processes of where they're going. Just kind of giving them materials or some basic instructions and then see what they can find out. [Tina, interview #1, p. 3]

> To me, inquiry is making them think about what they're doing and be able to explain what they're doing. And having questions that… are more open-ended so, what can you tell me about this? Tell me everything you know instead of what are the X intercepts, what are the Y intercepts, whatever, something that's straightforward. [Nadine, interview #2, p. 11]

The novice teachers may have experienced some difficulty articulating exactly what inquiry in mathematics classrooms *is*, but most were quite clear on exactly what it is *not*— it cannot be confused with the exercise paradigm currently dominating classroom pedagogy. In fact, my research suggests that there have been no significant ruptures in the exercise paradigm and the data points to several reasons why this is the case. In this chapter, each of these reasons is discussed separately in terms of how the data offers this interpretation. Connections are then made to Bourdieu's social field theory to make sense of the network of relations and interpretations. Instead of referring to these interpretations of data as 'reasons', I use the term 'threads of normativity' (and later, doxic threads) to capture the normalizing or regulating effect of the discourses. The four key threads of normativity are: (1) teacher education programs have been described as an environment replete with a 'do as I say, not as I do' undercurrent, thus perpetuating pedagogies already quite familiar to prospective and novice teachers (i.e., teaching

as one was taught), (2) prospective teachers (and indeed novice teachers reflecting back on their teacher education program) desire a recipe-based form of teaching and learning through inquiry, (3) novice teachers fear that the TLTI paradigm will not only take far too much time to design and implement, but that it will also require the act of "selling" its indiscernible benefits to parents, administrators, and even students, and (4) TLTI is generally viewed as "extra" and a "time-filler," apparently because it has not been successfully and evidently linked closely enough to curriculum outcomes and key mathematical 'content' learnings.

Disrupting and unraveling these threads of normativity in mathematics classrooms hold promise for the TLTI paradigm in mathematics classrooms. Together, however, the four threads of normativity currently form a network of discursive relations that structure the social space(s) of mathematics classrooms and provide familiarity and comfort to many teachers, students, and others involved.

'Do as I say, not as I do'.

Many of the novice teacher research participants saw *how they were taught* within the teacher education program as different from *how they were told to teach*. Several participants described it as 'do as I say, not as I do' teacher education. They perceived that the emphasis was on product learning rather than acquiring an understanding of the process of learning. Some participants observed that the manner in which mathematics is taught at the high school level is congruent with how they were taught within teacher education mathematics classes – through direct instruction involving lecture and the assignment of mathematical exercises. There was recognition by several participants that the school experiences they were expected to facilitate for their students differed greatly from those they had experienced themselves, commenting

"what I'm teaching is very different from how I was taught". When asked about her teacher education experience of inquiry as a pedagogical focus, one participant stated:

> … because that's what was being pushed on us in most of our courses, to some extent, I kind of expected that every once in a while I should be getting a lesson like that, but I never did, for the most part, you know. [Karen, interview #2, p. 23]

The *doing* of teaching, as *told* about in teacher education, was different from what they had experienced in both high school and university, so participant teachers felt challenged in constructing an interpretation of their role according to the heightened level of content expectations and the perceived escalated demands of teaching through inquiry.

Recipe-based TLTI.

Many novice teachers described their experience of learning within the teacher education program as a *procedure of acquisition* rather than gaining insight into a creative learning process. They described their own efforts as prospective teachers as being focused on subject area lessons, with the goal of producing a series of lessons that would be usable in the field later when they were employed. One participant talked about the construction of a "nice fat binder, ready to go". Whether it was a nice fat binder or a linear progression through the textbook, they found comfort and safety in a recipe-based approach to being a teacher—a sort of teacher 'technician', which involved adhering to accepted norms of direct instruction using a textbook. Not only did the direct approach mean less time required for preparation but it was what several participants described as the norm in their schools. Seeing other teachers on their staff who "do notes and assignments" arriving at school "twenty minutes before the bell", knowing the exact page in the text where they will be continuing that day, and completing their teaching work day shortly after

the final bell at the end of the school day, was disheartening for novice teachers and served as a draw toward this normative approach. The message received through the research interviews was that the novice teachers might be willing to relinquish their grasp on the fat binder or the textbook if, and only if, teacher educators and education programs could provide similar time-saving and error-free recipes for being an *inquiry* teacher. When asked to share their learning about inquiry in teacher education, two participants stated:

> I didn't have as many practical experiences as I would have liked… we're kind of on our own I find a lot in university. It was like, 'Oh, here, make a lesson plan and critique it', but we didn't really get shown how to do these things, how to make your plans exactly what we should be looking for. [Tina, interview #1, p. 2]

> I just want something more concrete, but I just feel like… it's still such an abstract idea that this is what I think inquiry learning is but I don't know if I'm really on the right track with what I'm doing, so... I didn't have a lot of concrete examples from university. You know, I had a few things that I tried, but yeah not a lot to go from so I think that I would have liked to see more of that really concrete, this is how you could teach a lesson for this unit, for this course that would be inquiry learning. And this is how you could do something that's really, really specific and concrete, and even if I have to adapt it so that it works for me at least it's a starting point. Cause yeah I felt like especially my first couple years I really defaulted to direct instruction, and it wasn't the best I think but…. [Nadine, interview #2, p. 12]

'Selling' benefits of TLTI.

Novice teacher participants spoke about resistance to teaching and learning through inquiry from a variety of stakeholders who directly influence them as (becoming) teachers – school division personnel, school principals, teacher colleagues, parents, and students. Participants shared their personal awareness of how the expectations of other teachers, the school division personnel, or their principal(s) exerted a role in how they saw themselves as a professional. A few participants specifically highlighted their school division strategic direction and the need for students to achieve. The necessity for students to demonstrate proficiency with curricular content was described as promoting a return to the known instructional strategies related to textbook and direct instruction. One participant expressed the regulatory effect on her practice by her school division: "… our division has asked us all to try and be on the same page at the same time with the Math 9 and give the same exams and so it's like, uh, it's just awful" [Sandra, interview #1, p.7].

Another participant noted that within the school division there was an understanding of the importance of *staying away* from innovative ideas or trying something new. Such allegiance to established, approved instructional behavior was valued and was known as "not starting brush fires".

Several participants who did incorporate an inquiry-based approach to teaching felt overt or covert disapproval by colleagues within the school. The effect of power differentials within schools was identified by participants who described how colleagues had the effect of shaping expectations of "how to do" teaching.

> I think that you… you do you feel like you just want to do a good job and not get into trouble, and so yeah you default to what you know works, or what other people in the

> building are doing, which for the most part is direct instruction. [Nadine, interview #2, p. 14]

It was also expressed that more experienced teachers exerted their authority regarding 'how things were done,' with the effect that the teacher participants felt a lack of personal power in how they approached facilitating learning with their students. They spoke of the opposition other teachers had to the use of inquiry learning, describing it as "not the best way to teach mathematics" and "not the best for students".

Another influential stakeholder the novice teachers spoke about was their students' parents. Parents' expectations of how mathematics should be taught were based in how they had experienced schooling themselves. Since most parents lacked experience in inquiry-based activities, they were unable to assist their own children and were anxious that their children learn "the content" in a manner similar to the way they had learned it. Some participants described this challenge as one of past experience interfering with, or influencing, current practice. As parents' concerns were focused on making certain their child attained what was needed for post-secondary, the use of an inquiry learning approach was perceived as a diversion from the real task of teaching and learning.

Some participants reported that even their students were reluctant to participate in inquiry-based learning activities; that students themselves found the transition to inquiry-based learning difficult. Having had a surplus of school experience focused on direct instruction content strategies, students found it difficult to be asked to pursue more learner-centred, problem-focused mathematics. Patterns of how the students had been taught limited them in not only how they learned but also in how they *wanted* to learn. One participant, Toni, described her students as "just wanting me to open their brain and insert the answers," finding teaching such students

difficult. “It’s like pulling teeth trying to get them to figure things out; they’re not used to doing it” [Toni, interview #1, p. 8].

No “filling time” outcome.

The use of inquiry learning in the teaching of mathematics was understood by several novice teachers in the study to be an alternative teaching strategy that *could* be used; however, it was perceived to require a significant amount of time, to not achieve readily discernible outcomes in the same manner that direct instruction did, and while it was seen to engage most students, it was ‘messy,’ making it hard to know if content had been covered and skills had been attained.

Time was perceived by many of the participants to impose restrictions and influence their instructional decisions. With such pressures, the participants felt they were not able to engage in inquiry learning, which they spoke about as instructional experimentation. They emphasized that the need to “cover the curriculum” preempted the use of inquiry learning and caused them to defer instead to direct teaching strategies.

For several participants, inquiry-based learning was used as a “time-filler” – something fun and interesting for the students to do, but not considered an effective approach to student learning.

> And so that was one of the projects that I did. And it’s a nice time filler and it gives me a break. So when I give that it’s when I start to get stressed; it’s like 'okay, we’re going to do this project now'. Because it kinda takes the stress off me. [Karen, interview #1, p. 3]

In fact, one participant spoke of projects being used with students who were unable to understand the level of content that the course demanded, suggesting that projects represent a 'remedial'

course of action, rather than an approach which actually encourages students to engage with mathematics concepts at a deeper level.

The novice teacher participants did not perceive a clear relationship among inquiry-based learning, the promotion of problem-solving skills, student-directed learning and student achievement. Being aware that inquiry-based learning is a focus of new curriculum initiatives, all the participants indicated that they "should be doing more of it" but that they simply could not since student needs and content coverage were of primary importance. Time, students' functional academic levels, and access to resources were cited as further limiting the use of inquiry-based learning.

In noting how inquiry is a much nicer fit for elementary school mathematics classrooms, one participant commented on how the emphasis in high school needs to shift to the acquisition of content, and with that shift comes a perceived need to teach students in a more traditional manner:

> Math can be inquiry-based and it can be fun and it can be open-ended questions and all the little buzzwords, or whatever, that are awesome in education right now. At the end of the day though, math is something that is right or wrong and that is a concrete skill, and we have to teach kids how to learn concrete skills. [Judy, interview #1, p. 8]

Introduction to Bourdieuian Analysis

For years now, research has directed reform efforts in mathematics teaching and learning toward more student-centred questioning and active engagement with mathematics. However, Zeichner (2009) points out: "More often than not, knowledge presented to teachers generated through academic educational research is presented in a reified form, which does not invite

teachers to engage with it intellectually" (p. 109). This research acknowledges that teacher educators are "ask[ing] new teachers to engage in practices that are compatible with innovative curriculum orientations but which generally are not the established school approach" (da Ponte & Chapman, 2008, p. 256). The question of how (or if) these established school approaches can be disrupted in/through teacher education is an enduring one, but one that I believe Bourdieu's social field theory can partially unpack.

In other research (Nolan, 2012), I present and analyze a number of circulating discourses articulated by prospective teachers during their internship (field experience). While the study described in this chapter focuses on novice teachers, and in particular on the theme of teaching and learning through inquiry (TLTI), the threads of normativity identified are strikingly parallel to those discourses. In that previous research, I conceptualize the discourses as dispositions to reflect the Bourdieuian claim that a person's habitus, or set of dispositions, in a social practice field (that is, a socially instituted and structured domain or space, such as mathematics classrooms) is tightly bound up in and by the network of practices and discourses within that field. Even though habitus and field are dynamic—always evolving, always partial and never a perfect match for each other— a person will be most comfortable in a field where her habitus is a good fit with the logic and operation of the field. The traditional (legitimate and sanctioned) discourses of the field 'persuade' prospective and novice teachers toward a comfortable, non-conflicting habitus-field fit in their classrooms and schools. In other words, "fields provide something like magnetic attraction for agents who are disposed to engage in a given field (if their habitus is aligned to the field)" (Rawolle & Lingard, 2008, p. 732). Each of the agents participating in the social practice of a given field is seen to bring particular resources and/or strategies, referred to as capital, to the domain, where (generally) "[p]articipation implies a

shared commitment to the value of the activities of the field and of field-specific capital" (Warde, 2004, p. 12).

In this chapter, due to its limited scope, my Bourdieuian analysis focusses primarily on two specific concepts to help interpret the threads of normativity; the concepts are that of capital and doxa[2]. In Bourdieu's social field theory, capital plays an important role in the relationship between field and habitus in any/every social practice. Bourdieu describes three forms of capital (cultural, social, and symbolic) but for the purposes of this paper and its focus on mathematics classrooms, cultural capital is most relevant. According to Grenfell (2008), cultural capital is basically a synonym for status (or position) and refers to the resources that one brings to (and/or has access to in) the field. Cultural capital "is a credit, it is the power granted to those who have obtained sufficient recognition to be in a position to impose recognition" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 138). Dika & Singh (2002) refer to three states of cultural capital: "embodied (dispositions of mind and body), objectified (cultural goods), and institutionalized (educational qualifications)" (p. 33).

In short, cultural capital includes all the things that help people gain access to, and position themselves strategically within, fields. According to Rawolle & Lingard (2008), "each social field provides a way of accumulating and distributing field specific forms of capital" (p. 732). It needs to be said, however, that while access to such valued forms of "field specific" capital can improve one's position and status in the field, it is also one's (privileged) position and status in the field that determines access to capital. In other words, capital ensures the protection and reproduction of existing power relations and social class distinctions.

[2] For a more detailed introduction to, and overview of, the key concepts of Bourdieu's social field theory, it is suggested that the reader refer to Nolan (2012) and/or Nolan and Walshaw (2012).

The second concept, doxa, is conceptualized as a type of disposition, or "way of thinking and speaking the natural and social world" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 169). Doxa refers to that which is learned, valued, and fundamental — the set of core values and discourses guiding the arrangements and actions of a social practice field. What makes particular (but certainly not all) dispositions 'doxic' is in how they come to be viewed as natural, normal, and inherently necessary, while actually being quite arbitrary and contingent. The meaning of doxa, or the *doxic experience*, lies in understanding that "[m]ost people, most of the time, take themselves and their social world somewhat for granted: they do not think about it because they do not have to" (Jenkins, 1992, p. 70). In other words, educational reproduction occurs because particular doxa tends to legitimize the natural order of things and the place of agents/structures within it, which generally leads to privileging and reproducing the current dominant paradigm. In this research, the currently privileged dominant paradigm is being depicted by the threads of normativity running through the theme of teaching and learning through inquiry— in other words, the threads are doxic.

Discussion and Interpretations

The four threads of normativity, or doxic threads, presented in this chapter—all related to the classroom social practice of teaching mathematics through inquiry—draw attention to how tightly woven together the network of relations within a field are. If one ignores, for a moment, the teasing apart of these threads (which I have done for the purposes of making sense of the research participants' connections to inquiry in their becoming (a teacher) process) it can be seen that the threads mirror the core of established and taken-for-granted social practices of schools (school doxa). Naively, I had expected to see more diverse forms of, along with increased access to, the cultural capital available and valued when prospective teachers transitioned from being

interns to becoming teachers; that is, from internship to "one's own classroom." What has been confirmed instead is just how entrenched particular privileged forms of capital are in the network of normalized relations. The data from this study confirms the status of several normalized forms of cultural capital and doxic dispositions: access to a nice, fat binder of 'ready-to-use' lesson plans; establishing (and achieving) clear, unambiguous lesson plan outcomes; not being seen to 'waste' or fill time when content must be covered; falling in line with others' expectations for what it means to know and learn mathematics; a clear and unambiguous structure (recipe) for inquiry teaching, such that it is bestowed with legitimacy and credibility.

The habitus of many novice mathematics teachers finds a comfortable home in a field where these forms of cultural capital are most valued and have even reached doxic status; that is, when the discourse on/around them remains inhibited and heavily regulated. Furthermore, as evidenced in the data, if novice teachers exercise agency by introducing 'new rules for the old game,' institutional structures and pressures will most certainly return them to their original form of embodied cultural capital (their pre-disposed dispositions of mind and body). Unfortunately, the threads of normativity are easily maintained and reproduced as long as agents (particularly those who benefit from them) carry on as if this is 'just the way things are done,' thus drawing attention away from the (arbitrary) origins or roots and the promises of alternative discourses. As Bourdieu (1977) states, "[t]he truth of doxa is only ever fully revealed when negatively constituted by the constitution of a *field of opinion*, the locus of the confrontation of competing discourses" (p. 168).

According to Bourdieu & Passeron (1990), the essential function of an educational system (ES) is cultural and social reproduction, and thus "an ES must produce a habitus conforming as closely as possible to the principles of the cultural arbitrary which it is mandated to reproduce"

(p. 57). Planning and teaching a lesson that closely reflects the structures of curriculum, textbook, and a traditional content-focused 'exercise paradigm' (all constituting the cultural arbitrary being reproduced) represents considerable cultural capital for the novice teacher within the field of secondary mathematics classrooms. These field-specific forms of cultural capital reproduce a network of relations governing novice teachers' pedagogic actions in the field. Teachers "very quickly learn what particular pedagogic modes are legitimated… and the types of classroom arrangements that are privileged and said to be conducive to knowledge facilitation" (Walshaw, 2010, p. 122). Viewing these threads of normativity (or doxic threads) through the lens of Bourdieu's theory is a reminder of how "reproduction is achieved because social members internalise the 'rules of the game' and so adopt practices that ensure their 'unconscious' replication" (Nash, 2002, p. 272).

> I guess I just feel like, you know, you need to learn more but there is, when you actually get into your classroom and you have to start planning stuff, and putting stuff together, and you do kind of default back to how you were taught either when you did your internship or when you were in high school. And because… the cooperating teacher or teachers I had in high school were from that generation of direct teaching that's what I defaulted to… [Nadine, #2, p. 12]

Bourdieu's social field theory helps view the competing and conflicting demands on novice teachers and their process of becoming in a new light, understanding that the passive act of *wanting* to disrupt one's habitus is easier said than done when the school playing field remains intact. A study such as this one, however, carries the voices of novice teachers into the field of teacher education and curriculum classes, where the threads of normativity can be used to initiate reflexive analysis of school doxa/orthodoxy before entering their practicum field and ultimately

their careers as teachers. The belief is that the threads are so inextricably linked to, and implicated in, each other that it is challenging to disrupt or unravel them. However, through reflexivity, one can target underlying themes such as compliance and regulation sustaining these dispositions. By taking a reflexive stance in teacher education, and revealing the habits shaping action in/of the field, prospective teachers and teacher educators can trouble the discursive network of relations— represented in this chapter through the four threads of normativity— of mathematics classrooms.

This brief analysis of novice teachers becoming teachers may best be viewed as an opening— an opportunity to consider drawing on Bourdieu's social field theory to more carefully unpack the dispositions and tendencies surfacing in the disruptions and tensions of becoming a teacher. As stated previously, BSFT has been drawn on extensively elsewhere in similar mathematics research contexts (Nolan, 2012; Nolan & Walshaw, 2012).

Final Reflections

To date, novice teacher participants have contributed thought-provoking and intriguing responses to questions relating to becoming a teacher and the role of university teacher education programs. This chapter presents insights to inform one key research question; that is, how novice teachers experience and live out their sense of agency and identity formation when immersed in the powerful discourses of school mathematics. It has done so by examining the discursive drive toward teaching and learning through inquiry, out of which four threads of normativity attempt to ground the question in a particular context/example.

To teach and learn through inquiry is to shift from closed, one-answer mathematics toward embracing more openness and ambiguity, dispositions of discomfort for many novice teachers.

The traditional structures of the field, along with the forms of cultural capital that are currently believed to hold value in the field, persuade teachers away from the dramatic shift in habitus that is demanded of inquiry teaching. Learning to teach through inquiry is itself an inquiry process, fraught with ambiguity, uncertainty and significant investment of time. Clive & Kosnick (2006) discuss how prospective teachers "would like us just to tell them what to teach at each grade level and which activities to use, believing this would be more efficient and would prepare them better" (p. 10). Such a simplistic and technical view of what teacher education programs should be and do is not uncommon. However, becoming and being an *inquiring teacher* who values learning *through inquiry* demands that teacher education programs strive for a more informed understanding by all (students, teachers, parents, administrators) of just how complex teaching (mathematics) is. In other words, teacher educators must emphasize how TLTI is itself an inquiry process, and thus cannot be packaged with fixed recipes and shelved for purchase by the consumer teacher.

Teaching, as Phelan (2005) has argued, is "a complex and uncertain enterprise that demands ongoing, thoughtful inquiry and discernment" (p. 340). In the context of such complexity and uncertainty, reflections on the research analysis presented in this chapter means disrupting the threads of normativity and working to reveal their arbitrary and contingent nature. Adopting a reflexive stance in teacher education would aim to expose the socially conditioned and subconscious structures that underlay the reproductive nature of the doxic threads. Such a reflexive stance could begin by drawing on Bourdieu's social field theory (specifically, the concepts of habitus, field, capital and doxa) in teacher education to expose the discursive productions of these threads, along with the normalized forms of cultural capital and doxic dispositions discussed in this chapter.

In reflecting on her process of becoming a (mathematics) teacher, Sandra shares:

I'm still becoming a teacher; I still kind of feel like I'm growing into it. Like, I don't, some days… you know, I don't feel like a real teacher even though I am. So it's kind of going to be a weird transition-y sort of year from… you know, I sit at the big desk and it's almost weird sometimes. [Sandra, interview #1, p. 17]

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Part 4 *'Teacher as transformer' and 'teacher as agent of change'*

Teacher Education as a Site for Philosophical Mindedness

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Abstract

This paper seeks to problematize conventional notions of "teachers as change agents" by suggesting that such a burden is too much to place on teachers early in their careers. It offers the concept of philosophical mindedness as possibility for reframing approaches to teacher education within the courses we often teach. The authors argue that education can be a site for cultivating and modelling philosophical mindedness. The philosophically minded educationist is characterized as an individual who is invested in living prudently and reflectively with respect to his or her educational decisions. This involves three stages. First, one begins to *learn about the world*. Second, one begins to *think about the world*. Third, one *lives in the world*, a process that bears the responsibility of action and engagement with contemporary education.

Introduction

The education reform literature abounds with references to teachers as "transformers" or "agents of change." The (vastly oversimplified) argument seems to go something like this: The K-12 school system is out-of-date and needs to be improved through the implementation of research-based ideas about teaching and learning. Teachers are, in most cases, the ultimate arbiters of what actually occurs in their classrooms. Thus teacher candidates, properly imbued with knowledge of research-based practices and empowered as change agents, represent the best hope for large-scale change in the educational system. The "right" teacher education program will create knowledgeable new teachers who, after getting jobs in the school system, can become agents of change and reform the school system from within.

Although not stated as simply or as bluntly, much of the rhetoric about preparing new teachers seems to at least tacitly imply that new teachers should enter their careers prepared to enact major changes to their classrooms and, by extension, to the education system. Thus it falls to teacher educators to find ways to prepare teacher candidates to be change agents. This line of thinking is the focus of Schön's (1983) critique of technical rationalism. It also leads to calls for improving what Shulman (1986) called "pedagogical content knowledge."

We argue that this line of thinking, although presented here as a caricature, is still at least tacitly found in the assumptions of many teacher education programs and many calls for education programs. Although there has been much debate over the roles of the academy and the field for teacher candidates, we argue that *an important site for teacher development is internal*, particularly the development of what we have referred to elsewhere as "philosophical mindedness" (Christou & Bullock, 2012). Far from the abstract images of the ivory tower that these terms might bring to mind, we focus the development of wisdom in future teachers. In so

doing, we argue that learning to be philosophically minded is perhaps the most practical thing that a teacher candidate can learn in a teacher education program. We concur with Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005), who argued in their introduction to *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World* that "The goal for preservice preparations, then, is to provide teachers with the core ideas and broad understanding of teaching and learning that give them traction on their later development" (p. 3). Developing a critical habit of mind represents these core ideas.

In this paper we will argue against descriptions such as "teacher as transformer" and "teacher as agent of change," since these descriptions are misleading and place an inappropriate burden on new teachers who are already struggling to reconcile the effects of their "apprenticeships of observation" (Lortie, 1975) and the acculturating effects of their field experiences. As Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) have noted, it takes years for teachers' professional knowledge and identity to develop and focusing on the development of philosophically minded teachers might be a more productive way to help them to "become" teachers than tacitly charging them with overthrowing 150 years of tradition in mass schooling.

Mindedness as a Nested Model

Our approach in this paper is to provocatively offer a possibility for thinking about how to design learning experiences offered by teacher education coursework. We worry that teacher candidates feel, at times, crushed under a weight of tacit expectations to enact change. Many teacher educators have justifiably called attention to the importance of *modelling* in the teacher education classroom. Lunenberg, Korthagen, and Swennen (2007) explored the question "Do teacher educators model new visions of learning in their own practice?" (p. 597) in a small study and concluded that teacher educators tended to underutilize what they referred to as *explicit*

modelling in their practice. Lunenberg et al.'s concern seemed to be that the teacher educators in their study tended to miss opportunities to explicitly demonstrate the links between the techniques employed in their courses and the research literature. One of Lunenberg et al.'s forms of modelling was labelled "explicit modelling AND facilitating the translation into the student teachers' own practices" (p. 598).

The message here seems to be that teacher educators need to find ways to explicitly model their approaches so that, in the act of unpacking their pedagogies with teacher candidates, these same candidates will be encouraged to enact similar approaches with their students. There is undoubtedly merit to this idea; indeed both of us have devoted considerable time in our careers to trying to make our approach more explicit to teacher candidates. In this paper, however, we are calling on teacher educators to consider their courses in a slightly different way. We wonder about the possibility of framing experiences in teacher education courses as sites for *mindedness*. Although this reframing might include some of the explicit modelling approaches mentioned above, we also believe that there is something quite different about this version of mindedness. A call for teacher candidates to learn to be philosophically minded is not simply a synonym for other stated aims of preservice teacher education, such as the more familiar stated desires to create reflective practitioners, critical thinkers, or change agents. We use the term *philosophical mindedness* explicitly in our work to link it to the more established concept of *historical mindedness* (e.g., Bruno-Jofré & Steiner, 2007). Drawing on the literature (particularly Osborne (2008) describing the historical mindedness within education, we develop a three-phase model to describe the developmental growth of philosophical mindedness within an individual person.

The first phase, *Knowing about the World*, addresses the necessity of knowledge. One must know and seek to know in order to think philosophically within the world. The second

phase, *thinking about the World*, addresses habits of mind that can be cultivated in the individual. This phase is inclusive of the one that precedes it, although it broadens the scope from knowing (as well as seeking to know) to thinking. *Living in the World*, the third phase in the development of philosophical mindedness, concerns the individual's habits of living. It is the operationalization of knowing and thinking; it is the active working out of the philosophic life.

Because this model is developmental, it can be conceptualized within a nested framework. *Thinking about the World* is the enactment of *Knowing about the World*, or, its purposeful application to philosophical thinking. *Living in the World* enacts both of the preceding phases, applying these to philosophical living. The sum of the parts, we argue, is philosophical mindedness.

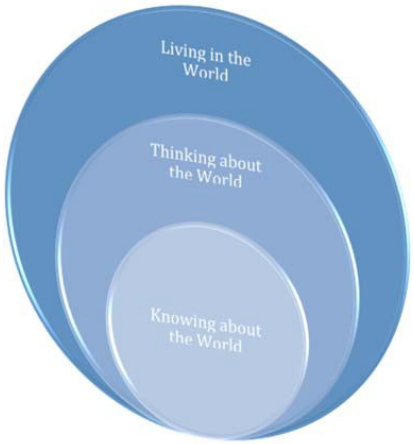

Figure 1: A Nested Model for Philosophical Mindedness

Philosophy is both an educational means and an end. As a means, it is a way of learning about the world, about our place in the world, and about wisdom. As an end, it is a purposeful striving to live well and wisely in the world. As educationists, we can begin the path to

philosophical mindedness by taking note of the inexorable links between philosophy and education. The former is entirely woven into the fabric of the latter. Both are inseparable from the seeking for and realization of the good life. Philosophy concerns the love of wisdom, and education is both the contemplation of and operationalization of wisdom. How do we know? What can we know? How ought we to live? What is our relationship to others? What are our obligations to ourselves? We might continue questioning *ad nauseum*, and perhaps never exhaust questions that are equal parts educational and philosophical.

Philosophy is the principal concern of all matters educational. By virtue of being involved in education – being, what we define, an educationist – one is embroiled in philosophy. Thus teachers, students, parents, the public – all educationists – are all philosophers. We ask educationists to be philosophically minded, which is to say that we argue that it is necessary for all stakeholders in education to take their philosophical responsibilities seriously.

Our paper will explore the development of philosophical mindedness in teacher candidates as an internal site for teacher education. In so doing, we will take seriously the call for teacher candidates to develop the ability to "view knowledge and situations as problematic and socially constructed rather than as certain" (Zeichner & Liston, 1987, p. 28). We will explore the possibility that rather than charging new teachers as change agents, teacher educators should focus on developing pedagogical approaches that enable the cultivation of philosophical mindedness.

In developing our case for philosophical mindedness, it is useful to anchor our argument to the somewhat less esoteric concept of historical mindedness. An historian must know about the world and think about the world, before he or she can be live in the world in a way that is historically minded. We are not, in other words, born historically minded, but we can cultivate

historical mindedness by practicing history. Likewise, educationists are not necessarily philosophically minded, despite the intimacy between the concerns of philosophy and those of education. We can become philosophically minded only by purposefully and thoughtfully embedding philosophy into our educational lives.

Knowing about the World

Ken Osborne (2008) describes *knowing about the world* as "the necessity of knowledge" (p. 10). A historian must seek, and be able to seek, factual knowledge about the world. Facts matter. A historical account that claims, for instance, that a sophisticated alien species descended to earth in order to build the Canadian Parliament buildings would not be historical. The scholarly community – not to mention common sense – would refute the claim on the basis of evidence. Those individuals who took the time to refute the claim about aliens building Parliament would be compelled to seek, and then present, warrants for their contradictory claims. Various combinations of archival data, building records, newspaper records, personal correspondence might be chosen to refute the spurious claim. Thus, it is as important for historians to have access to evidence as it is for them to have knowledge. The two are inseparable. Osborne (2008) offers a pertinent analogy: "If we are confronted with a Holocaust-denier, for example, we can hardly break off the argument while we go off to consult the Internet. We have to rebut the falsehood then and there, and this requires knowledge" (pp. 10-11).

George Orwell's dystopic novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* presents, Osborne continues, a portrayal of a society in which people lack both independent knowledge as well as access to such knowledge. Within the discipline of history, the scholarly community serves this purpose of

checking and balancing knowledge claims. In principle, historians hunt for new sources and perspectives to examine the past not because it will make their account more original, but because these allow us as a whole to have a richer and more complex understanding of the context under examination. While the inhabitants of Orwell's novel are one extreme of the spectrum, the contestants on trivia shows are the other extreme. The former know nothing about the past except that which has been told them, and the latter – literally, in an etymological sense – are asked to trivialize their knowledge of the past, by recalling facts in isolation of their contexts and meanings. Facts matter, but they do not suffice.

Learning about the world within the parameters of philosophy and teacher education entails study of educational philosophy. Traditional foundations courses in philosophy have sought to cultivate familiarity and fluency with philosophers of education and the history of educational ideas. Such courses outline an instructional model for this first stage of development on the path to philosophical mindedness. This can be evidenced by textbooks in philosophy of education, which generally offer the teacher candidate primary source readings from philosophers over a broad spectrum of time and a variety of contexts (Black, Lottich, & Seckinger, 1972; Curren, 2007; Dunn, 2005). The candidate has the opportunity to read, to understand, and to know about philosophy of education by encountering the works of figures such as Plato, Rousseau, Dewey, Roland Martin, and Egan first-hand.

Thinking about the World

Historical thinking concerns what we do with the facts that we recall and have access to outside of our recollection. Once we are asked to construct an argument, as we might in an essay, or to otherwise marshal and examine facts to a purpose, we have to think historically.

There are numerous academic research projects, as well as pedagogical ones, contemporaneously defining historical thinking in schooling and seeking to understand both how we think about the past and how we can develop multifaceted ways of thinking about it (Lee & Ashby, 2000; Lévesque, 2011; Seixas, 2011).

Peter Seixas, Canada Research Chair in Historical Thinking at the University of British Columbia, is at the Canadian forefront of this massive endeavour to understand historical thinking and to relate it more intimately to schooling. With Tom Morton, Seixas defines the concept as follows: "Historical thinking is the creative process that historians go through to interpret the evidence of the past and generate the stories of history" (Seixas & Morton, 2012, p. 2). They frame the matter in terms of six concepts; each represents a historical "tension, or difficulty, that may be irresolvable in an ultimate way" (Seixas & Morton, p. 3). The six tensions are:

1. Historical significance: How do we decide what is important to learn about the past?
2. Evidence: How do we know what we know about the past?
3. Continuity and Change: How can we make sense of the complex flaws of history?
4. Cause and Consequence: Why do events happen, and what are their impacts?
5. Historical Perspectives: How can we better understand the people of the past?
6. The Ethical Dimension: How can history help us to live in the present?

(pp. 10-11).

Thus we develop a historical fluency gradually, never entirely resolving the past, but always seeking to examine it more critically and with greater sophistication. Facts matter, but what we do with the facts that we recall is a question of greater complexity and, we argue, significance.

With respect to the cultivation of philosophical mindedness in teacher education, *thinking about the world* involves the posing of critical questions and the seeking of thoughtful responses. A few indicative examples of questions are: How ought we to educate? What worldviews are embedded in the world around us? Why do we concentrate on particular subjects at the expense of others? The teacher candidate continues to *learn about the world* in identifying questions and answers, as each stage is nested within the one that precedes it, yet the emphasis is on using a knowledge of philosophy and education to challenge assumptions, to ask important questions, and to begin to imagine suitable solutions to problems.

Living in the World

We argue that the sixth historical thinking concept, which pertains to ethical living, subsumes them all. Historical mindedness as both term and concept has a history that we have discussed elsewhere, yet it remains for us the closest analogue to philosophical mindedness (Christou & Bullock, 2012). It forces us to contemplate, educationally, our *humanitas*, that Roman notion that encapsulates so many questions, which we can estimate by contemplating associated words such as humanity (as in to show), human (as in to live and be), and the humanities (the study of both). Humanitas as adjective applies to individuals who live ethically and in contemplation; they seek virtue with respect to their selves, their communities, the environment, and to their principles (Nybakken, 1939).

The historically minded individual is examining it even as he or she lives within it. She or he is using the habits of historical thinking to consider the present. He or she knows, and uses that knowledge to inform the present. She or he is eternally open-eyed and, in their context, is practicing what history has taught to act judiciously and well.

At this stage in the development of a teacher candidate's philosophical mindedness, he or she is enacting the philosophic life. This involves an ongoing commitment to *learning about* and *thinking about the world*. It requires that the teacher candidates move from thinking about educational problems to actually acting upon these. He or she seeks to act prudently in educational contexts, seeking to work collaboratively, as well as autonomously, as an active and invested educational stakeholder.

Teacher Education as Philosophical Mindedness

So far we have argued that teacher candidates need to learn to approach their practice as philosophically minded educationists. We used the lens of historical mindedness to develop a nested model for philosophical mindedness, comprised of *knowing about the world*, *thinking about the world*, and *living in the world*. In the final section of the paper, we will examine how teacher education might be conceptualized as a progression through these phases, in which both the process and the end result is a philosophically minded educationist. We do not mean, however, to imply that this kind of progression is linear or that each phase is mutually exclusive; in practice there will necessarily be interactions between each of these phases of philosophical mindedness.

The first phase, *knowing about the world*, is an elusive concept in teacher education. One can see how an argument to know more about the world of teaching and education might devolve quickly to the rhetoric of learning how to "apply" best practices, and how teacher educators might be tempted to focus their efforts on what Loughran (2005) referred to as "tips and tricks and stories of teaching experiences [that] may be well received by student teachers (and even expected by them)" (p. 8). Munby and Russell (1994) named this difficulty the *authority of*

experience by describing the discrepancy that exists between teacher candidates and teacher educators:

> The circumstances of telling their students about teaching unavoidably commits them to the authority of being in charge, and their students are automatically placed under authority. The authority of experience gets transformed into the authority that says, I know because I have been there, and so you should listen. The authority of experience simply does not transfer because it resides in having the experience. (pp. 92-93)

Accepting Munby & Russell's premise – namely those who have taught have knowledge gained via an authority of (teaching) experience that cannot be simply transferred to those who have not had the same experiences – requires us to think about how teacher education might allow teacher candidates to know about the world (of teaching and learning). Fortunately, teacher candidates are far from *tabula rasa* in this regard due to their lengthy "apprenticeships of observation" (Lortie, 1975, p. 61). Put simply, nearly everyone in a teacher education program has spent hundreds of hours in elementary and secondary school classrooms. Candidates come to teacher education programs able to mimic teacher behaviours simply because they have seen them so many times – even though they often might not be able to articulate the reasons why professional teachers behave as they do. One might fairly argue that teacher candidates come to their programs *knowing about the world*, at least in propositional terms. Most candidates, particularly those who were educated in the same province in which they attend teacher education programs, have an excellent knowledge of the cultural routines and patterns of school, which Tyack and Tobin (1994) referred to as the "grammar" of schooling." Although their knowledge of how to teach might be initially more based on folklore than on research-based warranted assertions about how we learn, the fact remains that most teacher candidates come to

their programs know about the disciplinary world in a far more significant way than, say, law students come to their academic programs. All future teachers have had significant, prolonged interactions with members of the profession just by virtue of the way society is organized; the same cannot be said for all future lawyers.

The second phase, *thinking about the world*, is far more problematic. "As with any good performance, good teaching looks easy," noted Munby, Russell, and Martin (2001, p. 895). Teacher candidates may come to their programs with significant knowledge about the world of education, but that does not necessarily mean that they are able to argue how or why a teacher should behave when confronted with particular problems of practice. Thinking about the world of teaching requires candidates to challenge their prior assumptions about teaching and learning in light of critical analysis of their experiences during a teacher education program. The practicum field experience is, of course, an important locus of these experiences and teacher candidates require space to develop an authority over their own experiences as they develop what Schön (1983) referred to as knowing-in-action.

Knowing-in-action was Schön's (1983) response to the common and, in his view, flawed assumptions of the technical rationalist underpinnings of professional education. Schön defined technical rationality as the view that "professional activity consists in instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and technique" (p. 21). Although there is a place in professional knowledge for the application of research-based findings that might be codified as propositions, Schön (1983) makes a convincing argument that there is artistry to the ways in which professionals solve problems, particularly in the ways in which professionals frame a problem to begin with. He provides the example of jazz musicians engaged in collective musical improvisation as an example:

> When good jazz musicians improvise together, they also manifest a "feel for" their material and they make on-the-spot adjustments to the sounds they hear . . . . As the musicians feel the direction of the music that is developing out of their interwoven contributions, they make new sense of it and adjust their performance to the new sense they have made. They are reflecting-in-action on the music they are collectively making and on their individual contributions to it, thinking about what they are doing and, in the process, evolving their way of doing it. (pp. 55-56)

Of course the jazz musicians have spent countless hours developing their propositional knowledge of musical scales, modes, and the way their instruments respond under particular conditions. But music is clearly more than the application of technical knowledge. How a musician frames his or her context matters. Those who write about the artistry of teaching are often, in our view, writing (at least tacitly) about this improvisational process. Consider nearly any situation that educators are likely to encounter in their daily practice and one can quickly imagine a myriad of responses. A teacher notices two students who are whispering to each other while the teacher is telling the class about one of the causes of World War I. Does the teacher stop what she or he is doing and call the students out for their presumed rude behaviour? Does the teacher let the incident pass, knowing that Student A is likely to be providing an explanation to Student B, who is an English-language learner? Does the teacher decide to change her or his approach, realising that the increasing chatter in the classroom might indicate that the students have been talked at for long enough during the course? How a professional frames a problem matters; there is artistry and improvisation that goes far beyond instrumental approaches to problem solving.

Finally we come to teacher education as a way of *living in the world*. We believe that most teacher educators would agree that is inadvisable to view teacher education programs as complete preparation for a career in education. Teacher education programs can play an important role in beginning of a process of professional learning. Some professional learning should entail thinking about what educational research says about any number of problems that a teacher is likely to face: Should students with learning exceptionalities be included in traditional classrooms or are their needs better served in specialized learning environments? Of what use can mobile digital technologies be to elementary school science teachers? Should students focus on basic arithmetic before solving problems in mathematics? Does class size matter? Educational research has tackled these and a host of other questions that are relevant to the daily lives of teachers, and it is not unreasonable to expect some familiarity with the results of careful, sustained, scholarly inquiry.

At the same time, *living in the world* as a philosophically minded educationist requires more than having propositional knowledge. It means understanding the artistry of practice and the uncertainty of the complex array of decisions that teachers make every day. *Living in the world* also means acknowledging the role of our prior assumptions when evaluating an educational claim and that, in many ways, how we frame problems of practice matters more than how we solve problems. It means, fundamentally, a disposition toward asking questions. Take, for example, the recent rhetoric around educating for 21st-century skills. Greenhow, Robelia, and Hughes (2009) note:

> Recommended 21st-century competencies include creative and original multi-media work in complex project-oriented teams in which the problems, tasks, players, roles, and processes are in flux and often distributed across geographic and cultural distances

> (Dede, 2007; ISTE, 2007)—essentially transforming the work that individuals do and how and with whom they do it. To support and supervise students, teachers are expected to colearn, model, and facilitate the development of such competencies. (p. 248)

Teacher education that remains in the phase of knowing the world might entreat teacher candidates to learn how to use particular software packages designed for education and might encourage teacher educators to "model" practices that incorporate the use of interactive whiteboards (e.g., SMART Boards) and mobile tablet devices (e.g., iPads). Teacher education that moves to the phase of thinking about the world encourages teacher candidates to analyze critically the place of technology in their practice and to consider ways that a particular piece of software or hardware might enable particular solutions to a problem of practice. Teacher education that moves to the phase of living in the world not only considers how technology in education might help to solve some problems and enhance the artistry of practice, it also questions the assumptions underlying the argument. Is technology in education a "new" development? How do recent claims made about the power of online learning compare with similar claims made by proponents of educational television (Cuban, 1986)?

We acknowledge that the transition from knowing the world to thinking about the world to living in the world of education is neither linear nor stepwise. In proposing a nested model, we acknowledge both the foundational nature of knowledge, but also the interplay between how we act on knowledge gained through propositions and developed via an authority of experience and how we enact this knowledge in the world. We believe that teacher education needs to attend, explicitly and often, to teachers as thoughtful problem-framers in addition to problem solvers.

Conclusions

In this paper we sought to provoke trouble many conventional ideas about "teachers as change agents" by suggesting that such a burden is too much to place on teachers early in their careers. Instead, we offer the concept of philosophical mindedness as possibility for reframing approaches to teacher education within the courses we often teach. We are aware that our paper is conceptual rather than empirical; an important focus of our work in the coming years will be to consider ways in which our pedagogies of teacher education might foster the kinds of ideas that we wrote about in this paper. Collaborative self-study seems like an appropriate methodology for working toward this goal.

We argue that teacher education can be a site for cultivating and modelling philosophical mindedness. The philosophically minded educationist is characterized here as an individual who is invested in living prudently and reflectively with respect to his or her educational decisions. This involves three stages, which are developmental. First, one begins to *learn about the world* through study and meditation on texts drawn from the history of educational philosophy, seeking always to understand them within their own context and tradition. Second, one begins to *think about the world*, which is a process of question-posing, problem-solving, and imaginative inquiry about contemporary education, drawing consistently upon the knowledge that one has and continues to uncover. Third, one *lives in the world* as a philosophically minded educationist, a process, which involves an ongoing commitment to *knowing* and *thinking about the world,* but with the responsibility of action and engagement with contemporary education.

At the core of much of our work is a resistance to the traditional notion that philosophy is necessarily divided from the "real world" of practice. Egan (1997), for example, offers a powerful example of the ways in which philosophical work might stimulate a reconsideration of

taken-for-granted assumptions in education. He provided an in-depth articulation of the ways in which educational experiences might be developed around five different kinds of understanding: somatic understanding, mythic understanding, romantic understanding, philosophic understanding, and ironic understanding. He argued, in part, that each of these kinds of understandings offers different perspectives "by means of which particular features of the world and experience are brought into focus and prominence and combination" (p. 104). For Egan, education begins with the somatic and mythic, "whose basic forms are genetically programmed as a result of our evolutionary history," before "general learning capacity comes increasingly into play, enabling us, more laboriously, to develop Romantic, Philosophic, and Ironic kinds of understanding by recapitulating the cultural inventions of literacy, theoretic thinking, and extreme linguistic reflexiveness" (p. 277). These ideas are the core of an active research program that has engaged many researchers and teachers in developing an "imaginative" approach to education (http://ierg.net).

Much has been made about the decline of the foundations – history, sociology, and philosophy of education – within the landscape of teacher education (Christou, 2009; Christou & Bullock, 2013; Kerr, Mandzuk, & Raptis, 2011). Foundations scholars are rightfully insecure concerning their place within teacher education. At the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE), the Canadian Association of Foundations of Education (CAFE) has arranged a working pre-conference with the theme "Strategies for Preserving the Foundations of Canadian Teacher Education." We argue that the foundations should be preserved, but not in their traditional roles. Focussed reading of philosophical texts supplemented by instruction from faculty is a necessary aspect of *knowing about the world,* but it is not sufficient. Teacher candidates must engage with educational questions and contexts with a

deep commitment to pursuing *knowledge,* a preparedness to *think* critically, and an understanding that they must *live* and act with wisdom and with prudence. Teacher education, re-envisaged as a site for the development of philosophical mindedness, cannot be a place where the foundations of education are marginal. It is, rather, a place that sees these subjects as seminal to the task of preparing teacher candidates for the challenges of living ethically and well, while fostering a commitment to thoughtful action.

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Awareness, Attention, and Noticing in Teaching and Teacher Education

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Abstract

This chapter argues that what a teacher is aware of, attends to, and notices in pedagogical moments characterizes practical wisdom in teaching and is at the core of teaching and, thus, of learning to teach. Transcending one's socialized limitations as a teacher will, thus, require the capacity to work with and on one's awareness, noticing, and attention in pedagogical moments. The chapter outlines, first, the ontological and epistemological foundations of such a practical wisdom approach to learning to teach. Then, the chapter will discuss implications of such an approach for understanding the subject matter of learning to teach and for initial teacher education program design. Finally, the chapter will make the case that the capacity for practical wisdom in teaching is central to a teacher's agency of change and to social justice issues.

One of the four themes of this book on sites for teacher development concerns the question which capacities are needed for teacher candidates and teachers to allow them to transcend the limitations of their educational socialization so that they can become agents of change. The notion of teachers as agents of change generally refers to the idea that teachers contribute intentionally and actively to changing societal injustices of different kinds (e.g., Ayers, Quinn, & Stovall, 2009). In the main part of this chapter I will focus on a particular capacity that allows teachers to overcome limitations of their socializations as teachers or towards becoming teachers in the case of teacher candidates. After explicating the capacity and its epistemological and ontological framework, I will discuss implications of the role of this capacity in teaching for learning to teach and for teacher program design. In the conclusion section I will argue for the importance of this capacity of addressing one's socialization for a teacher's development as an agent of change in the social justice sense.

One of the generalized characteristics of beginning teachers and more so of teacher candidates is that they do not notice the same things as a more experienced teacher does. While an experienced teacher notices indicators of a problematic situation *as the situation is about to develop*, teacher candidates and beginning teachers often do not and then have to deal with the fallout. On the other hand, it is characteristic of expert teachers to have developed routines that can be executed with automaticity in order to deal efficiently with different aspects of one's teaching practice (Berliner, 2001; Bransford, Derry, Berliner, & Hammerness, 2005). It is that very automaticity that can also be problematic because "the trouble with habits is that they obscure noticing the possibility of choosing to act differently, precisely because they have become part of habitual practice" (Mason, 2002, pp. 71-72).

These points suggest the following: what teachers are aware of, what they attend to, and what they notice in given teaching situations is central to how they (re-)act in those situations. On the one hand, the quality of relevant awareness, attention, and noticing generally improves as teachers develop greater teaching expertise. On the other hand, the routines and habituations that partially make such improvement possible can be in the way of obscuring needed work on what one is aware of, attends to, and notices in a given teaching situation and what one does not. In this chapter I explicate the idea that the capacity of what relevant features a teaching situation a teacher notices and attends to is at the core of becoming and being a competent teacher, where a competent teacher is one who is capable of transcending socialized routines and practices *through* her ability to become aware of what enables her to respond in teaching situations. The relevant capacity that is then at the core of this chapter is a teacher's capacity to work with and on her capacity to attend to and notice salient features of a given teaching situation.

To develop this idea, I outline an epistemological and ontological framework based on the human capacities of awareness, attention, and noticing, and outline how important aspects of teaching and learning are to be understood within such a framework, and discuss important implications of such understanding for preservice teacher education. The chapter outlines the fundamental ideas of *a theory of teaching and learning grounded in the human capacities of awareness, attention, and noticing*.

Awareness, Attention, and Noticing

The following elaboration on the notions of awareness, attention, and noticing as particular mental phenomena is embedded into a particular ontological and epistemological framework. At the core of this framework lies the notion of "experiencing", a central notion in

Dewey's theory of knowledge (e.g., Biesta & Burbules, 2003), in Maturana and Varela's theory of knowledge (e.g., Maturana & Varela, 1998), and in Marton and Booth's (1997) theory of learning.

The "biological roots of human understanding" (Maturana & Varela, 1998) lie in the status of humans as living organisms and in the way human organisms relate to the world in which they are embedded. As living organisms, humans act within the world in accordance with their own structure and undergo ("suffer") the consequences of their acting (Dewey, 1920, p. 86). It is through such interaction (acting in the world and suffering the consequences) that organisms, including humans, *experience* the world. How we experience the world – i.e., how we interact with it – depends on, as Dewey suggests, the structure that characterizes humans as a specific type of living organism. This structure shapes what and how we perceive the world and, thus, how we know the world (Maturana & Varela, 1998, chapter 1). While certain features of our perceptual and cognitive structure as humans will stay more or less constant, many other structural features are variable and are shaped in response to our experiences, which in turn shapes how we experience the world in future interactions with it (acting upon it and suffering the consequences). Thus, knowing something is manifested in the structural features that shape how we interact with the world. Along this line, Dewey understands knowing as knowing the conditions and consequences of the happening of experience (Biesta & Burbules, 2003, pp. 44-45), and Maturana and Varela (1998) suggest that "all doing is knowing, and all knowing is doing" (p. 26).

There are two important implications of this view. The first is that humans vary in what they know and, thus, how they experience the world, and, then, how they come to know the world more deeply based on those different experiences. The second consequence is that

"reality" for humans is constituted in the way we experience the world – there is, at least for organisms like humans – only the experienced world (Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 138). It is in this sense that Maturana and Varela (1998) say that "every act of knowing brings forth a world" (p. 26). Both consequences together mean that while we might talk about and assume an objective world out there, what each of us can access is only the world as we experience it – and that means that "reality", as the world we experience, is different for each of us. As I will outline below, within this framework, learning is conceptualized as the coming to know (experiencing) the world in a particular way. Therefore, learning can be seen as a particular type of experience that leads to particular ways of further experiencing the world (more on this below).

Awareness, attention, and noticing are mental phenomena that are at the core of the way we experience (the natural, social, and psychological aspects of) the world. Following Mason (1998, p. 258; 2011, p. 43), I conceptualize awareness as the mental state that enables behaviour and action ("awareness-in-action") – our interaction with the world. In order to enable action or behaviour, our awareness can but does not have to be conscious awareness. For instance, most of our walking is generally enabled by subconscious awareness. Awareness is an intentional state in the sense that we are always aware *of something*. The "objects" of our awareness include our thoughts, motives, feelings, emotions, and our sensuous and perceptual stimuli (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 822). Furthermore, we can also be aware of awareness-in-action ("awareness of awareness"). For instance, I can be aware of the awareness-in-action that enables my walking along a street, like my awareness of my awareness-in-action of the relative height of the ground right in front of me and of the feeling created when my heel touches the ground.

Attention is a process of focusing conscious awareness, providing heightened sensitivity to a limited range of experience (Westen, 1999). In actuality, awareness and attention are

> intertwined, such that attention continually pulls 'figures' out of the 'ground' of awareness, holding them focally for varying lengths of time. (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 822)

My attention can be *directed* by me or it can be *captured* by something, like a noise or thought coming into my mind.

Noticing is a *shift* of attention from one object of my attention to another (Mason, 2011, p. 45). When I notice something, I become consciously aware of that something as my attention shifts from what I attended to previously to that something. If I notice something, it *captures* my attention, thus, draws my attention away from what I was attending to before. As such, I cannot intentionally notice something. I can at best ready myself to become aware of that something to make it more likely to actually notice it. Awareness of awareness-in-action arises from noticing (Mason, 2011, p. 43), as I have to notice my feeling of the heels touching the ground when I walk in order to become aware of (part of) the awareness-in-action that enables my walking at a particular time. Our awareness of awareness-in-action develops and is internalized through being sensitized to notice (Mason, 2011, p. 45).

Awareness, Attention and Noticing in Teaching

It seems obvious that what a teacher attends to, what she notices, and what she is aware of as she teaches and as she plans her lessons is important to the quality of her teaching. In this section I want to go beyond this obvious truism and develop what the perspective outlined in the previous section means for understanding teaching. For reasons of space I will limit the focus of my elaborations on probably the most important aspect of teaching: learning. What does this aspect – learning – look like from the awareness-attention-noticing perspective?

Learning is at the core of any notion of teaching, since teaching has the purpose of facilitating learning of students and because professional learning is central to becoming and being a teacher. In this section I conceptualize what it means for someone to learn (something), and then I argue for the relevance of awareness, attention, and noticing for this conceptualization of learning.

The ontological and epistemological framework outlined in the previous section suggests that knowing is what has us act and behave (interact with the world) one way or another and that, thus, has us experience the world one way or another. Following Ference and Booth (1997), I understand "learning as *coming to experience* the world in one way or another" (p. 33, emphasis added). Such "learning takes place, *knowing is born*, by a change in something in the world as experienced by a person" (p. 139; emphasis added): learning leads to a *change in the experienced world*. That means that learning is *not* about becoming acquainted with something in the world that the learner was not acquainted with before, an external object of learning, so to speak. Rather, learning something means a change in how the world is experienced, a change in the experienced world. For instance, when I encounter a black swan during a visit in Australia and learn that there are black swans, I do not become acquainted with a totally new entity, rather the world *as I experience it* has now changed. For instance, I now might entertain the possibility of swans that are neither white nor black when I next time encounter what looks like a green swan; or I might now have developed a greater sensitivity for potential variations of colour of the feathers of birds more generally, which will impact how I experience future encounters with birds. It is in this sense that Ference and Booth (1997) write, "learning is mostly a matter of reconstituting the already constituted world" (p. 139). Biesta and Burbules (2003) hold a similar view of learning as Dewey:

> This learning [by an organism] is, however, not the acquisition of information about how the world 'out there' really is. It is learning in the sense of the acquisition of a complex set of predispositions to act. In this process the world becomes more differentiated. It becomes, in other words, infused with meaning. (p. 37)

The notions of awareness, attention, and noticing help us to further elaborate on the idea that learning means a change in our experienced world, because it is through the changed way in which we attend to the world and what and how we notice certain aspects of the world that the change in our experienced world manifests itself. Mason (2002) expresses how learning is linked to ways we attend to the world as follows (see also Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 142):

> Learning consists of becoming more sensitive to making distinctions, developing awareness of connections and inter-relations amongst those distinctions, broadening the range of resources one calls upon and the tasks one undertakes in order to pursue aims and goals which are more precisely articulated, and increasing the scope and nature of possibilities and potential we recognise, because our present moment . . . is extended. (Mason, 2002, p. 231)

Learning thus means an increased scope and nature of possibilities and potential (Mason) or a more complex set of predispositions to act (Dewey), which in turn suggests that in most cases having learned something means that we can – sometimes even have to – *attend* to our experienced world in ways that we did not / could not before. For instance, when we say that someone has learned that photographs can be easily manipulated using computer programs, it *means* that the person might now attend with heightened sensitivity to features of a photograph that might suggest to us that a picture on the cover of a magazine in a magazine rack next to the cashier in a supermarket has been manipulated. This example illustrates how having a more

complex set of predispositions to act (having learned something) can capture our attention in particular contexts in new ways: the learning leads the person to shift her attention to searching for particular features in photographs. The person notices something she would not have noticed before.

If what we attend to and what we notice in particular contexts is characteristic of what it means to have learned something, then the relevance of the notions of awareness, attention, and noticing for facilitating learning (teaching) becomes obvious: helping someone else learn something means helping that other person attend to / notice her experienced world in ways different from before.

This paradigmatic perspective on learning has the notions of awareness, attention, and noticing at its core. Since learning is at the core of teaching – understood as the practice of facilitating learning – this perspective provides a new outlook on teaching as a professional practice. To be consistent, this perspective will need to be carried over to preservice teacher education, because teacher education practice has itself at its core learning and teaching. Thus, from this perspective, there is no need to further argue for the relevance of awareness, attention, and noticing for preservice teacher education or for that matter, for teacher education more generally. Rather what I will do in the next two sections is to outline some of the more important *implications* that such a perspective on learning (to teach) has on preservice teacher education. The next section will look at implications for our understanding what learning to teach is primarily about or, in other words, what the "subject matter" of learning to teach in initial teacher education programs is. Identifying such subject matter will have to have implications for the design of initial teacher education programs. Following the next section I will outline some of those implications for initial teacher education program design.

Implications for Preservice Teacher Education:

The Subject Matter of Learning to Teach

Mason (1998) suggests that academic subjects like mathematics arise "when we become aware of awarenesses-in-action such as those that constitute counting, ordering, classifying, and relating, and start to formalise these in the language of algebra and geometry" (p. 258). Poetics, the science of writing and understanding poetry, develops when we become aware of our awareness-in-action involved in writing and reading poetry. For instance, we become aware of what we are aware of (awareness-in-action) when we hear a poem written in pentameters: a particular rhythm and rhyme structure. If awareness of awareness-in-action lies at the core of a subject matter as suggested, then such second-level awareness is central to a teacher of such subject matter.

From this perspective, subject matter is characterized by the type of awareness of what has us interact (awareness-in-action) in the world in a particular way. Those who "know" the subject matter are aware of their awareness-in-action, i.e., they are aware of what enables particular behaviour and actions that characterize the practitioners of that subject matter. Therefore, knowing subject matter is linked to awareness of what we are (partially at the subconscious level) aware of so that we are able to behave and act in the way that is characteristic for someone knowing the subject matter. This links knowing of subject matter directly to what it *enables us to do* or, in other words, what such awareness allows us to attend to and notice in the world of our experiences.

What is then the "subject matter" in learning to teach? The subject matter in learning to teach arises when we become aware of the awareness-in-action, where the awareness-in-action is

the awareness (conscious or not) that enables a (good) teacher to do what she does. The question this section focuses on is in what way this awareness-in-action is relevant to teaching.

Teaching has many components involving a diverse range of activities: planning lessons, marking, reflecting on past teaching, etc. But at the very heart of teaching are the activities linked to teacher-student(s) encounters in the here-and-now – teaching is primarily about interacting with students in the moment. Van Manen (1991a, 1991b) has used the term *pedagogical moment* as a label for

> situations where we [the teacher] feel called upon by the child [student] to do something. . . . A distinguishing feature of pedagogical moments is that something is expected of us. We have to do something, even if that is holding off for the moment. (van Manen, 1991b, p. 96)

It is these pedagogical moments that are at the heart of teaching because at its core teaching is about facilitating student learning, and it is in the encounter in the here-and-now that all the components of teaching "materialize". For instance, planning cannot give consideration to the actual context of the teaching situation for which the teacher plans – there are too many variables unknown at the time of planning, and there are also too many for a teacher to consider in her planning. So, the components that cannot be considered in the planning (including how students respond to an activity) will materialize in the moment in which the teacher enacts a particular plan. Thus, the awareness that gives rise to the subject matter in learning to teach is the awareness of the awareness-in-action that has the teacher act appropriately in the here-and-now of the pedagogical moment.

There is one approach to learning to teach that is concerned with exactly such acting in the here and now of the pedagogical moment: the practical wisdom approach to teaching and

learning to teach. The practical wisdom approach to professional practice goes back to Aristotle's distinction between technical knowledge (techne), theoretical knowledge (episteme), and practical knowledge or practical wisdom (phronesis) (for an explication of Aristotle's distinction, e.g., Dunne, 1993). A number of scholars have drawn on the idea of practical wisdom in the Aristotelian sense to characterize teaching (e.g., Shulman, 2004; Phelan, 2005; van Manen, 1991a). However, by far the most developed practical wisdom approach to learning to teach has been the realistic teacher education approach by Korthagen and his collaborators (Korthagen, 2001).

If at the core of teaching as a professional practice lies the (re-)acting in pedagogical moments, then the kind of knowledge central to teaching as a professional practice is practical knowledge (phronesis) or perceptual knowledge (e.g., Kessels & Korthagen, 1996; Korthagen, 2001, chapter 2; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999). Perceptual knowledge is the basis for a teacher's capacity for discernment: "Discernment speaks to a teacher's capacity to see the significance of a situation, to imagine various possibilities for action and to judge ethically how one ought to act on any given occasion" (Phelan, 2005, p. 62).

> Conceptual knowledge is not the type of knowledge that we need most in our case [the case of teaching]. It is too abstract, too much stripped of all kinds of particulars that are predominant in concrete experience: emotions, images, needs, values, volitions, personal hang-up, temper, character traits, and the like. (Korthagen, 2001, p. 27)

Conceptual knowledge is, of course, important to teaching, and perceptual knowledge (practical wisdom) makes use of conceptual or theoretical knowledge and of generalized rules, but "only as summaries and guides" (Korthagen, 2001, p. 27). "All practical knowledge is context-related, allowing the contingent features of the case at hand to be, ultimately, authoritative over

principle" (Korthagen, 2001, p. 25). Conceptual or theoretical knowledge *serves* practical knowledge as needed.

The awareness-attention-noticing framework unpacks the idea of "perceptual knowledge" and its role in wisdom-based learning to teach into different components. To illustrate these components and how they relate to each other and the notion of "perceptual knowledge" I want to draw on one concrete example of a pedagogical moment. Let us assume that there are about ten minutes left until the end of class time, that I have originally planned one more activity to be done during this class, that this planned activity will take much longer than the remaining ten minutes, and that students are about to finish the second last activity. This creates a pedagogical moment for me because I now face the issue of having to decide on an alternative plan for the last ten minutes. Let us further assume that my thinking in that moment goes along the following lines: I have about ten minutes left; there is not enough time for the planned activity; starting the planned activity with so little time is not an effective approach; the best might be to stop here, but since I cannot do that, I have the students engage in an activity for the remainder of the class that engages them with the topic at hand; I tell the students that for the remainder of the class they can work on their homework, which I already assigned at the beginning of the previous activity.

Within the awareness-attention-noticing framework it is awareness-in-action that enables my acting in this pedagogical moment. The behaviour linked to such action might have included my looking at the clock, my moving to the front of the classroom, my calling for attention, and my speaking to the students. My thoughts linked to such action might have included my noticing of the time, my noticing that there is less time available than my planned last activity requires; my decision to abandon the last activity and to let students work on their homework for the rest

of class time. By definition, what gives rise to the behaviour and the thoughts is some form of awareness, namely the awareness-in-action. Some components of my responding to the pedagogical moment I might be (consciously) aware of (awareness of awareness-in-action), others I might not be aware of. For instance, I might be aware of the time that I saw displayed on the clock, but I might not be aware of the complete structure of the awareness-in-action that led to my using a particular way of calling students to attention or the spatial awareness that was the awareness-in-action that allowed me to move to and stand in front of the class.

From the awareness-attention-noticing perspective on the wisdom approach to teaching and learning to teach, the pedagogical moment and my responding to it involves three relevant "components": awareness of awareness-in-action (what I am consciously aware of what gives rise to my responding in that moment), awareness-in-action that I am not aware of, and features of the situation that did not give rise to any action on my part. Above I provided examples for the first two. Two examples for the last one might be the following: (a) in the situation I did not notice indicators that could have suggested to me that the group of students in the far back corner was not even close to having successfully finished the last activity, which was designed as a prerequisite for the homework assignment; (b) at the time of the pedagogical moment, I did not give consideration to the potential that assigning homework for the last ten minutes in class is a very ineffective use of time for some students.

As I understand "perceptual knowledge" (Korthagen) and "discernment" (Phelan) being used in wisdom approaches to learning to teach, those terms would talk about awareness in awareness-in-action, and insufficient perceptual knowledge or discernment in a given pedagogical moment talks about those features of the moment that did not give rise to any action on part of the teacher. The two examples given at the end of the previous paragraph illustrate two

types of perceptual knowledge that might be salient to a given pedagogical moment but was not available to me in the example: something I did not notice (consciously attend to) and ideas that were not available to me at the time of the pedagogical moment.

Following Mason's (1998) notion of a subject matter, it is our awareness of awareness-in-action that gives rise to the subject matter of learning to teach. To draw on the example above of the pedagogical moment, what learning to teach as a subject matter then is interested in is the awareness-in-action that gave rise to my responding in the example: my looking at the clock, my moving to the front of the class, my using a particular way of calling upon students' attention, my deciding that students should begin their homework for the remaining ten minutes, and so on. The systematic study of such awareness-in-action, i.e. the study of learning to teach, would then explore issues in learning to teach like time management, planning of activities, classroom management, homework assignments, and socially, developmentally, and culturally responsive teaching. Generally, the subject matter of learning to teach is then the awareness of awareness-in-action that enables a teacher to (re-)acting appropriately in response to the significant features in a pedagogical moment. Such appropriate (re-)acting in pedagogical moments requires the drawing on prior experiences that relate to the moment at hand (including experiences engaging with educational and pedagogical ideas), and the ethical judging of what is to be done in this very moment. For instance, in the above example, my letting students start their homework for the last ten minutes might be more a habitual response to this particular feature of the situation (ten minutes left without a time-appropriate activity). Alternative ways of responding in those situations were (so I assumed) not available to me at that very moment, which limited the way I was able to respond in the moment and might have made my responding less adequate. To draw on the two examples from above, I was limited in my responding by not noticing a salient feature

of the situation (that some students were not ready to engage meaningfully with the homework assignment) and by not having available in the moment alternative possibilities to respond to a pedagogical moment with this particular feature, namely having ten minutes left in class without a time-appropriate activity.

Learning to teach from a practical wisdom approach within the awareness-attention-noticing framework, then, is about helping teacher candidates develop a particular kind of awareness of awareness-in-action, namely awareness, attention and noticing appropriate and needed for the kind of discernment discussed by Phelan (2005). Thus, central questions for learning to teach from this perspective are: What does a teacher candidate need to notice (attend to) in certain types of pedagogical moments? What does a teacher candidate need to be aware of in those moments? And how can we make it more likely that a teacher candidate notices the salient feature of a pedagogical moment?

Understanding the subject matter of learning to teach in the way just described has obviously implications for pedagogy in preservice teacher education and for teacher education program design. Some ideas about the types of implications of the practical wisdom approach for teacher education *pedagogy* are presented in Falkenberg (2012, 2013), Korthagen (2001), and Korthagen, Kim, and Greene (2013). The next section will focus on the implications of this approach to learning to teach for preservice teacher education program design.

Implications for Preservice Teacher Education: Program Design

The design of a preservice teacher education program should give consideration to what teacher candidates are to learn, the way in which they are assumed to learn to teach, and the pedagogies that respond to those assumptions. In the previous section I have outlined

implications of the awareness-attention-noticing perspective on learning and on what the subject matter of learning to teach is. In this section I will discuss implications of the awareness-attention-noticing perspective on learning and the understanding of what the subject matter of learning to teach is on preservice teacher education program design. I will discuss what I consider two such major implications for the design, one linked to the important role of engagement with concrete teaching experiences, and the other one linked to the level of flexibility built into the program design.

From the perspective outlined above, learning to teach is primarily concerned with a teacher's acting in the here-and-now of the pedagogical moment. All other aspects of teacher education practice are seen as supporting such acting. As argued above, practical wisdom approaches to learning to teach have that very focus. What does a practical wisdom approach that is concerned with developing teacher candidates' awareness of awareness-in-action in pedagogical moments in teaching imply for program design? The most important implication can be illustrated by drawing on Korthagen's (2001) practical wisdom approach to preservice teacher education. He suggests that within a practical wisdom approach to the education of teachers

> [a teacher educator's] task is to help the student become aware of salient features of the experience. One is there to help the student see, not to teach the student a number of concepts. One is there to help the student refine his or her perception, not to provide the student with a set of general rules. One is there to help students make their own *tacit knowledge* explicit . . ., to help the student capture the singularities of the experience, and to find the rightness of tone and the sureness of touch that only holds good for the particular situation. One is not there to lecture about educational theory, to instruct general rules, or to extensively discuss instructional principles. For 'the matter of the

> practical' is just not helpful very much by such conceptual knowledge. What it needs is the development of perceptual knowledge. (Korthagen, 2001, p. 28)

If we accept Korthagen's view of what the central task of teacher educators is, then teacher education programs need to be designed so that they engage teacher candidates with first-hand experienced pedagogical moments. Such engagement needs to help teacher candidates to notice salient features of pedagogical moments, to have available a range of possibilities to act in the moment, and to ethically judge how to best act in this moment. The main implication for program design is then to provide for such learning experiences early on and regularly throughout the program and to facilitate and scaffold those experiences with the objective of helping teacher candidates to develop and work on and with their awareness of awareness-in-action as those are the basis for their (re-)acting in pedagogical moments. There are two different types of contexts for such experiences.

The most powerful type of context is provided by the practicum component in pre-service teacher education programs. Here teacher candidates have ample opportunities to encounter first-hand experiences with pedagogical moments, either through their own teaching or by observing authentic teaching. However, in order to help teacher candidates *to develop* practical wisdom, those experiences have to be facilitated and scaffolded, which has two important implications for program design, one concerning the linking of university-based coursework and the field-based teaching experiences, and the other one concerning the question of who is involved with teacher candidates' field experiences.[1]

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[1] Bullock and Russell (2010) have rightly pointed out that teacher candidates experience authentic teaching (as students) in all their on-campus course work, and that that teaching (by the teacher educator) can and should become itself a focus of inquiry. While this first-hand experience of pedagogical moments by teacher candidates does not have direct implications for program design, it does have implications for a pedagogy of teacher education in the context of

Learning "theory" in courses that are isolated from practice teaching is ineffective in a practical wisdom approach to learning to teach, because it runs counter to the need that teacher candidates have to learn and practice theorizing their experiences with pedagogical moments. Such theorizing (as an activity, not a set of statements) needs to arise from and be relevant to the immediate need to deal appropriately with experienced pedagogical moments. This requires an appropriate competency on the part of the teacher educator (collaborating teacher or university staff), which is supported by having university-based teacher educators being directly involved in teacher candidates' practicum experiences. Such an idea of "linking theory and practice" through program design features has not just been proposed by proponents of a practical wisdom approach to learning to teach, but all those who see the "problem of enactment" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, pp. 37-38) and the "theory-practice divide" (Falkenberg, 2010a, pp. 10-17) as best addressed through a closer relationship between university-based course work and school-based practice teaching, for instance through: providing extensive field experiences across the entire program (e.g., Dillon & O'Connor, 2010); involving the same teacher educators on campus and practicum schools (e.g., Beck & Kosnick, 2006); working with professional development schools (e.g, Darling-Hammond, 2005); starting with early practicum experiences (e.g., Korthagen, Loughran, & Russell, 2006); providing university-based seminars while teacher candidates are in their practicum (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2006, chapter 6); and having students teach in schools as part of university course work (e.g., MacDonald, 2010).

The second main implication of the practical wisdom perspective on learning to teach for teacher education program design concerns the need for flexibility within a teacher education program. Teacher education programs that are fixed in terms of the number and types of courses

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on-campus course teaching and learning that is to support a practical wisdom perspective of learning to teach.

required are problematic. In fixed programs of this type the kinds of experiences that students require are assumed to be predictable *in advance*. In Falkenberg (2010b) I have argued for a program-adaptability approach to the problem of admitting applicants with different qualities to teacher education programs, where

> the courses within the program would need to allow the instructors to respond to the identified needs of students at the individual level and link the courses in a way that allows a team of instructors to teach from a *developmental* perspective over the time of the whole program. (Falkenberg, 2010b, pp. 23-24)

The need for such program adaptability to allow for a developmental approach to learning to teach is even more relevant if learning to teach is understood less as the learning of conceptual knowledge and more as the development of perceptual knowledge, i.e. the development of competencies of noticing and attending to certain features of a concrete pedagogical moment with an awareness of possibilities of acting and re-acting wisely in such a moment. Practical wisdom is not just more complex to develop than conceptual knowledge because it involves a teacher's judgment in concrete pedagogical moment drawing partially on conceptual knowledge. It is also more complex to develop because practical wisdom involves, as Korthagen (2001) writes, the ability "to find the rightness of tone and the sureness of touch that only holds good for the particular situation" (p. 28). To develop such "tact of teaching" (van Manen, 1991a) requires (a) rich experiences of pedagogical moments that teacher candidates can draw from when confronted with a new pedagogical moment, and, (b) ongoing help by teacher educators with noticing the salient features in a pedagogical moment and with developing the needed awareness that is required for acting wisely in those very moments. If a teacher candidate does not "see" what is to be seen in a pedagogical moment in order to act wisely, reading books or articles or

trying to memorize facts or develop conceptual knowledge will not help her to see what is needed to be seen.

From a social constructivist perspective on initial teacher education Beck and Kosnick (2006) make a program design suggestion that fits quite well with the program adaptability requirement from a practical wisdom perspective:

> We believe that a small cohort program with its own faculty team is the arrangement usually most conducive to these kinds of outcomes. The case for smallness has been made well by a number of writers on schooling . . ., and the same basic argument can be applied to preservice education. (p. 2).

Conclusion

In this conclusion section I would like to get back to the question raised in the introduction section: What capacities are needed to be developed in teacher candidates and teachers to help them transcend the limitations of their own socialization in the education system in order to become agents of change in the social justice sense? Two important capacities that are needed for such transcendence are (a) a teacher's capacity to be aware of, to attend to, and to notice salient features of pedagogical moments, and (b) a teacher's capacity to work on and with her capacity described in (a). Following I will elaborate on those two capacities.

How a teacher engages with students in the moment is one central aspect of social justice teaching. As hooks's (1994, chapter 12) example of confronting social class in the (university) classroom illustrates, how a teacher responds or not responds in pedagogical moments during class time can very much be a matter of social justice:

> Although no one ever directly stated the rules that would govern our conduct, it was taught by example and reinforced by a system of rewards. As silence and obedience to authority were most rewarded, students learned that this was the appropriate demeanor in the classroom. Loudness, anger, emotional outbursts, and even something as seemingly innocent as unrestrained laughter were deemed unacceptable, vulgar disruptions of classroom social order. These traits were also associated with being a member of the lower class (hooks, 1994, p. 178) .

Students who are loud in class, show anger or emotional outbursts, or laugh unrestrained create a pedagogical moment that calls upon the teacher to (re-)act – partially because, as hooks (1994) suggests, teachers "conduct their classrooms in a manner that only reinforces bourgeois models of decorum" (p. 180). What a teacher attends to in such a moment, what she notices, is also a matter of social justice. For instance, does she attend to the student behaviour *as* a violation of a model of decorum or (also) *as* a matter of class difference? Does she attend to the class background of her students in that very pedagogical moment? What a teacher is aware of, attends to, and notices in pedagogical moments is not just a matter of the quality of her teaching practice more generally, but is also a social justice matter, not least because "those of us . . . from working-class background are empowered when we recognize our own agency, our capacity to be active participants in the pedagogical process" (hooks, 1994, p. 183).

Thus, one site of teacher development for addressing one's limitation of one's socialization in the education system in order to become agents of change is a teacher's teaching practice itself. If it is a teacher's ability to notice the salient features of a pedagogical moment and to be aware of meaningful ways to (re-)act in the moment that is at the core of her professional teaching practice and of the enactment of practical wisdom in teaching, then any

change agency would mean *agency over one's ability to be aware, to attend and to notice*. Thus, from the perspective developed in this chapter, a core capacity that is needed to support transcendent change and the development of change agency in teachers and teacher candidates is *the capacity to work with and on one's awareness, attention, and noticing*. It goes beyond this chapter to suggest how such capacity can be developed, but Mason's (2002) *Discipline of Noticing* does provide a systematic approach to the development of this capacity (see also Falkenberg, 2012).

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Literature and Educating for Social Change

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Abstract

This article explores issues of using literature to promote teaching and learning about social equity and diversity for and with Teacher Candidates. The relevant literature considered comes from the field of education, as well as fields in conversation with it, such as gender and postcolonial studies. The focus of the article is the many uses for literature in promoting social change in educational contexts, including an assignment for Teacher Candidates that highlights the connection between literature, social equity and diversity instruction, and the role of teacher as transformer.

"I don't know how you deal with homophobic students" – Teacher Candidate

"Every instance of homophobia, racism, or sexism is a teaching opportunity" Teacher Candidate

Teacher education, perhaps more than any other professional training, requires candidates to deconstruct aspects of their identities, their experiences, and their social worlds. Reflection upon reflection is written, not just on teaching practice, but also on how experience has shaped the approaches and skills candidates bring to the classroom. My own experience of Teacher education had a profound impact on my sense of social justice. I began to see that issues such as racism, classism, homophobia, and sexism were not simply large-scale social problems, but that they played out in the very classrooms in which I was learning and teaching. I became attuned to the ways in which male students were asked to speak more than female students. I became aware of issues of bullying/harassment that related to racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia. I became angry that these issues were not a more crucial part of the curriculum.

The education system is the only true societal leveler that exists in Canada. While students will have different experiences and opportunities in their families, communities, and social circles, most students still receive public education, which means that the experiences in their classrooms and schools are what connect and bind them. It is, in my view essential, then, that schools redouble efforts to make anti-oppression central in the content of classroom teaching, and the substance of co-curricular assemblies and activities. The only way such a vision can possibly be realized is if Teacher education itself more strongly focuses on anti-oppression.

This paper arises out of the conference of the Canadian Association for Teacher education (CATE), on the topic of "teacher as agent of social change." CATE asked presenters to focus on the following ideas and questions:

> Descriptions such as 'teacher as transformer' and 'teacher as agent of change' suggest that teachers need to develop capacities that exceed their socialized repetition of the status quo in education. How important is this aspect of becoming teacher? How should these capacities be developed? How much control does/should teacher educators have in the process?

My academic background in researching and teaching literature, particularly those texts that address issues of race and gender, as well as those that move the reader through geographic spaces and cultural differences, has shown me that literature is the way to develop such capabilities and to promote the values of equity and diversity.

This paper addresses how and why literature is a powerful tool in creating teachers as "agents of change," within Teacher education programs. The problem I see in promoting social justice values amongst Teacher Candidates is that many faculties of education have been doing this work for some time, yet many emerging teachers do not necessarily "buy in" to what is being taught. In my own Teacher education, I can remember leaving a session of my favourite course; the course centred on issues of equity and diversity and how they relate to the teaching profession. Everyone in the class always said the "right" (read: politically correct) things, but outside of class I would hear students mock the course instructor and the course content. It was clear that these would not be teachers who would foster solid anti-oppression work in their classes. They were not effectively challenging their assumptions and beliefs about social class, race, gender, sexuality, disability, etc., even though the course was asking them to do so. I

wondered what the disconnect was between the course content and the enduring understandings. And I wondered how to change it.[1]

After teaching in the secondary school system for some time, I went on to pursue graduate work in the field of literature. My areas of specialization were postcolonial/world literature (specifically South African) and gender in literature. Both my academic research and my teaching at the post-secondary level consistently reinforced the same thing: reading works by and about marginalized individuals and communities has a profound impact on empathy and, ultimately, the desire to create a more equitable and fair world. Rather than an "objective" historical or sociological discussion about marginalized groups, literature gives students characters with which they can relate, and fosters a deeper understanding of social issues through that character-reader-author relationship. Numerous students have told me that their best understandings of global issues and events come from reading novels as opposed to textbooks. These students go on to find ways to stop bullying/harassment, engage with social programs that seek to fight injustice, and generally live lives committed to equity and diversity. Of course this does not happen every time and to the same degree with every student. But it has proven, in my own observations, much more effective than simply teaching about social issues. The use of literature is transformative for students in terms of grappling with their own identities and the social issues that produce oppression and injustice in local and global contexts.

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[1] In *Private Practices: Girls Reading Fiction and Constructing Identity* (1994), Meredith Rogers Cherland argues that literacy is "situated social practice" (212) and can be used for social transformation. She notes that critical pedagogy promotes a diversity of voices (18) and literature can help bring those voices into the classroom. Her project is about gendered reading, and mine is about gender as well as race, location, class, and diversity as a general construct, but our ideas complement one another.

Unlike many of my colleagues who draw from mainly pedagogical and educational theorists, my pedagogical approaches are influenced primarily by the literary theorists. This is foundational to why I use literature in the classroom; I understand it to be inextricable from teaching, learning, and growth. Mikhail Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination* (1982), for example, lent me the concepts of "dialogism" and "heteroglossia." Dialogism, rooted in the word dialogue, assumes that novels function through the interactions of speaking and hearing, writing and reading, encountering the other in relationship with the self. This is hugely important because our project asked Teacher Candidates to not only learn from the dialogues within the text, but to enter into a dialogue of sorts with the protagonist as well. Although fiction does not represent real conversation, it does represent the importance of multiple perspectives – something that is essential to the empathy and compassion required for social change. Heteroglossia, the idea that multiple perspectives and forms of writing also contribute to a more pluralistic understanding of society, is also something Bakhtin addresses. This is partly why our assignment relies on the form of the novel to bring forth the types of thinking and reaction that we are hoping will inform teaching practice.

Reading novels and other types of literature promote dialogue and hearing a multiplicity of voices. To me there is no doubt that this is one of the keys to using literature in education. Not only can it empower students (our Teacher Candidates as well as their students – current and future) to help them find their own means of self-expression, but it can help students emerge out of their own experiences and understandings and into other perspectives through their imaginations and interpretations in reading. Postcolonial critics also address the value of literature in education. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has many texts devoted to both literature and education, most notably *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (2008), in which she demonstrates that

literature is key for postcolonial pedagogy; without hearing a multiplicity of voices, it is difficult to transcend issues of privilege. Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994), gives us the idea of a "Thirdspace" between self and other, something that he also finds through reading.[2] These critics are a small sample of the many I have studied, and now incorporate into my pedagogy and teaching practice, who focus on equity and diversity, particularly in the arenas of gender and race, have been fuelled by theorists who consistently position literature and education as the primary means through which dialogue, empathy, and social change can happen. I am now in a particular position to be able to influence educators, and use literature, towards empowering them to become agents of social change.

I am currently teaching at the Trent School of Education. One of my courses, Sociocultural Perspectives on Human Development, introduces the ideas of sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, ableism, and other issues of bias and oppression. We talk about the impact of these identity/social issues on human development and on teaching/schools. Each week, I wonder how many of my students will leave the class and snicker, the way I saw them do after the course I took as a Teacher Candidate that broached similar topics. In order to combat the type of ennui or resistance that can come with doing anti-oppression work, one of the strategies is to introduce literary texts as teaching texts.[3]

As a result of my personal and professional experiences, it is part of my project to use literature as a way to teach about social justice and equity issues as they pertain to education.

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[2] Richard Beach's "Conducting Research on Teaching Literature: The Influence of Texts, Contexts, and Teacher on Response to Multicultural Literature" (2005) also references Homi Bhabha's "Thirdspace" (2), and also argues that, because race, class and gender are "institutionally constituted," (25), literature provides counter-narratives that engender social critique.

[3] My course coordinator, Karleen Pendleton Jimenez began doing this with her students. Both of us realize the link between literature, anti-oppression work, and education, but the specifics of the assignment I discuss here are hers and I am indebted to her work.

This paper focuses on the results of an assignment at our School of Education, in which Teacher Candidates are asked to read a novel (one of five that are offered to choose from), and to write a paper about how, if the protagonist of the novel were a student in their class, they would be able to teach them. Each novel had a crucial equity issue that affected the protagonist; issues such as racism, sexism, homophobia, the immigrant experience, and class struggles were represented. Our Teacher Candidates had the opportunity to use the literary text (fiction) as a way into understanding the tough problems that affect our real students (fact). The idea is that the literature produces social knowledge and also empathy, and that those are crucial to teachers developing skills as agents of social change. Our candidates were asked to reflect anonymously on the experience of this assignment, its applicability and effectiveness as a teacher training tool and whether the assignment might have affected a view of themselves as teachers who are/could be agents of change. Below is more explanation of the literature informing the project, and other social issues that bear on this assignment and the survey given to gauge student reaction. The survey data is then presented and analyzed.

There is much academic research on the topic of teaching through literature for social justice, such as "Effects of Children's Literature on Preservice Teachers' Opinions about Multicultural Education Issues" (1995) by Rebecca McMahon and Carolyn Reeves-Kazelskis; "Curriculum, Identity and Experience in Multicultural Teacher education," (1998) by Jon Young and Roy Graham; and, "Text and Context: Using Multicultural Literature To Help Teacher education Students Develop Understanding of Self and World" (2001) by Judith Singer and Sally Smith. These research texts are important for laying the foundation of the theoretical approaches to this sort of work. All of these theorists articulate the value of literature as a tool for the development of empathy for those in different circumstances. Literature as a forum for multiple

perspectives, relationships with characters, and a window into hardships one might not experience oneself, all add to other curricular tools and modes that foster social justice education. Voice is a common theme throughout the literature; writing not only empowers marginalized people to have their voices heard, but empowers people with relative privilege to be able to access those points of view. The survey research presented below highlights the findings of the above educational theorists: literature is an impactful tool for the promotion of social justice. The research bolsters the feelings and findings of my students: the use of literature is crucial to Teacher Candidates' understanding of their own identities, as well as those of others. And that these enduring understandings are in turn crucial for teachers becoming positive agents of social change throughout their careers.

One of the reasons I am drawn to the teaching of literature is that it provides a platform to get into the various voices and minds of diverse characters. I know of no other medium that allows for such deep and profound access to various subjectivities and perspectives. My doctoral dissertation, entitled *Re/sisters: South African Women's Literature* (2011), focused on women writing across race, creating dialogue and forging sisterhoods, through their writing. In light of the ways in which women of different races in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa experienced extremely different circumstances, with white women often colluding in the exploitation and oppression of women of colour, it is a difficult process for women to see one another as allies. Yet given the societal privileging of race over gender (both officially, through a government program that interpolated white women into its national aims, including the oppression of people of colour, and also in the resistance where women were often told that fighting sexism would have to wait until after apartheid's end), women have often found each other in spite of the odds, and have worked together for personal and political change.

The novels I studied all included examples of women writing across difference; forging fictional conversations with each other, in a kind of dialogic reconciliation process. Thus my thesis posited that women need one another's ally-ship, despite the differences among them, and thus social transformers (resisters) needed to heal from the divisions between women and foster a renewed sense of sisterhood (re-sisters). Literature, in allowing space for a comparison of situations, for the development of empathy, for the space to engage in dialogue, for the ability to transgress the boundary between self and other, has often been the medium of calling those in South Africa to action. In post-apartheid, it has provided a forum for reconciliation, for expressing experience, and for finding some common ground towards political emancipation, challenging gender-based violence, and fighting for the social transformation not yet completed in apartheid's wake.

My dissertation topic was inspired by a research trip I took to South Africa when I was undergoing my own teacher education. I had a grant to investigate how the schools fostered inclusion and diversity after they became integrated. I was interested in the lessons for anti-racist education in Canada, and also how the issues of memory, equity, and history were handled as students from very different backgrounds collided in the classroom. I found that South African novels were one way that students could negotiate with each other. They could argue over point of view, perspective, identity, and meaning, but through addressing characters that were outside of their own lives. I began to become excited to investigate the potential uses of literature in the classroom. As I have continued to teach at the secondary and post-secondary levels in Canada, I

have become more and more certain that literature is able to reinforce identity, challenge assumptions, and build bridges across difference.[4]

My students in the Trent School of Education read a novel that centred on a character experiencing marginalization and oppression. They had choice in which novel, which allowed different groups to discuss different social structures. For example, the novel *As Long as the Rivers Flow* (2011), by James Bartleman, describes the intergenerational effects of residential schools on Aboriginal Canadians. Students also could choose between *Funny Boy*, by Shyam Selvadurai (1994), which portrays a child growing up amidst the violence of divided Sri Lanka, and also questioning his sexual orientation. Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970), about a Black girl growing up in the Southern United States,[5] *The Pick-Up* (2002), by Nadine Gordimer, about a relationship between a Middle Eastern man and a white woman in South Africa, and *Lucy* (1990), by Jamaica Kincaid, about a domestic worker in the U.S. from the Caribbean, were the other choices.[6] Teacher Candidates wrote papers that were part literary analysis and part classroom planning. They imagine the protagonist is a child in their classroom, and articulate

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[4] Ingrid Johnston's *Re-mapping Literary Worlds: Postcolonial Pedagogy in Practice* (2003) charts a similar path. Johnston taught literature in South Africa and realized its potential for promoting dialogue across race. In Canada, she was concerned with the lack of multiculturalism reflected in the books assigned to students, and wanted to present students with a greater diversity of representations and perspectives. She studies the positive values of diverse students engaging with texts of their *own* histories, as well as how reading and deconstructing postcolonial texts might enable teachers and students to problematize representations of self, place, and the "other."

[5] See Laraine Wallowitz "Resisting the White Gaze: Critical Literacy and Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (2008) on how this text can help students learn critical literacy skills that can support social justice education.

[6] All of these are texts I had previously encountered as a student and teacher of postcolonial literature. For a related study, see James Greenlaw (1994) who studied students who were asked to read and respond to postcolonial texts in order to challenge the paradigms offered by a typically Western literary education.

how they could make them feel included and foster their learning. In short, through the novel, our Teacher Candidates use literature to consider issues of oppression and equity, and are asked to integrate that into how they imagine their future classrooms.

My goals in assigning this project are to have students experience the empathy for a character that is, in most cases, well outside of their own experience. Many Teacher Candidates, who need to have already experienced success in order to get into our program, have not faced the barriers that the protagonists of their novels face. Many of them had not considered how systemic oppression might look and feel on the level of the individual. Through this assignment, many of our students came to identify and empathize with the protagonist, so that pursuing inclusion became more personally important to them as emerging teachers.[7] I find the project to have been successful in terms of using literature to create teachers as "agents of change." Their own words are far more convincing, however.

The survey results of the students are used to determine the efficacy of the assignment, the impact it had on the Teacher Candidates' perspectives, and the usefulness in their view of using literature to teach about social justice with their own students. The survey used a mixed-methods methodological approach, whereby students were asked questions on a rating system on a variety of questions pertaining to the assignment, and then asked for their written feedback on each question. The quantitative data shows a positive reaction to the assignment, the learning it produced, and the future potential use for literature and social equity in teaching for these candidates. Much more valuable in ascertaining the effectiveness of our assignment, and the

[7] See also Janice Hartwick Dressel on "social responsibility and reader response" theory (2), and students developing empathy and critical thinking by "assuming a character's perspective" (60). For more on reader-response and teaching for social justice see Cai 1997.

ways in which Teacher Candidates transformed through the assignment, is the language with which they respond to the qualitative questions.

Teacher Candidates were given a survey to complete about the assignment. Below are the questions, the numerical ranking, followed by samples of the qualitative feedback that was given on the question. Surveys were completed anonymously and were optional; not everyone who completed the assignment chose to fill out the survey. There were ninety respondents.

The questions were designed to ascertain the efficacy of the assignment (whether it enhanced learning about social equity and diversity), whether Teacher Candidates would use literature in similar ways in their own teaching, whether they believed they were/should be agents of social change, and whether the relationship between literature, topics in social justice/equity, and teaching was productive. Below are the numeric findings followed by samples of qualitative responses for each question.

Question #1: The Novel I Read Helped Me to Understand Equity Issues Differently

Quantitative:

Blank /5	1 /5	2 /5	3 /5	4 /5	5/ 5
1	5	4	17	31	32

The majority of students felt that the novel changed their point of view. Unless they chose to give qualitative feedback on this question, we do not know whether those who responded that they did not experience such a change felt that a) the novel was not a useful tool or b) they already came with a sensitivity to and knowledge of issues of equity. We can see from

the numbers, however, that most students did feel they experienced their learning differently through this assignment as compared with others that did not have a literary focus.

Qualitative:

The qualitative feedback on this question highlights the way in which Teacher Candidates' beliefs were challenged through the reading of the novel. They responded with open statements to that effect such as: "After reading *The Bluest Eye*, I have a different perception of the oppression experienced by African-Americans. It became an eye opener to the effects of socialization"; "It taught me how frustrating things are when you are not part of the privileged part of society, or are part of the marginalized population"; "I felt more strongly connected to the history of aboriginals and felt that the novel by Bartleman helped illustrate how far reaching the psychological impacts of the residential schools was." These responses highlight that the reading of the novel was a personal experience for the Teacher Candidates that gave way to a change in their social approaches and understandings.

Others spoke about the form of the novel as being essential to their learning: "The book really let me enter the heads of the characters to understand how someone first hand experiences issues of inequality – eye opening"; "Partially, although I was well versed on the issue prior to – though it had a personal experience to the novel"; "The novel I chose taught me about equity issues in a way that was real." The question asks whether the novel helped produce learning, but Teacher Candidates were as focused on the content of the learning as the form. Responses such as these highlight that, were they to encounter these narratives in a non-fiction or other format, the learning would not have been as impactful. The second question on the survey asked for students to respond directly to the idea of literature as a forum for teaching equity and diversity:

Question #2: Teaching about Equity and Diversity through Literature Makes the Issues More Clear and Approachable for Students

Quantitative:

Blank /5	1 /5	2 /5	3 /5	4 /5	5/ 5
0	0	2	9	34	4

From this answer we can see, numerically, that Teacher Candidates do, on the whole, feel that teaching equity and diversity through literature is good for students. The answers are less in the "5" range than the "4" range on this question, suggesting that although they might have found the experience personally satisfying and positive for learning, they are not convinced other students would feel that way as strongly.

Qualitative:

Some Teacher Candidates felt very positive about the impact of teaching equity and diversity through literature: "Absolutely! I think that learning through literature is a good change from traditional learning, and also helps with literacy issues"; "Especially for younger learners who love and are comfortable learning through literature"; "Students make connections to the characters in the novel and relate to the experiences they faced." These candidates make note of the cross-curricular connections that teaching through literature can enable; as schools focus on literacy, using literature to highlight social knowledge reinforces the learning in both curricular areas.

These responses also allude to findings such as that in pedagogical research: that literature offers a different level of comfort, a heightened forum for empathy, and a richer text from which

to explore complex social issues that other forms of text. The uses of literature for empathy, for a way into uncomfortable topics, and a tool for engagement come up multiple times in their responses: "I think literature teaches students empathy. More importantly, it teaches us the value of listening to the stories of others"; "I think that reading a novel is a way to engage students and really allow them to become invested in the characters and issues they are reading about"; "It helps students talk about issues that can be touchy subjects without making it personal"; "Absolutely. Text to self connections construct meaning for kids"; "These are broad, intangible concepts which can make it hard for students to really understand them. Grounding them in literature helps." Other types of feedback suggested that literature is only one of many possible tools for teaching about equity and social justice: "Nonfiction can also be effective," but the vast majority of responses expressed enthusiasm for literature as a highly effective tool, and one that the candidates would use in their own teaching.

Question #3: Teachers Should be Agents of Social Change

Quantitative:

Blank /5	1 /5	2 /5	3 /5	4 /5	5/ 5
0	1	1	4	19	65

I was surprised by the enthusiasm that these numerical responses suggest. I did not think that the majority of Teacher Candidates thought it was part of a teachers' role to be an agent of social change. Whether this was a point of view they came to learn through our course and this assignment, or whether this has been foundational to their philosophy of teaching from the beginning, I found the responses to be very affirming of the work of our course in which we try

to encourage this approach to teaching, as well as offer tools to make the approach a reality in classrooms.

Qualitative:

Although the numerical responses were highly in the affirmative to the question of whether teachers *should* be agents of social change, a number of the written responses reflected a hesitation or apprehension about putting that belief into practice: "It's hard for some teachers not to get preachy. Whose idea of "social change" shall we bring to the classroom and weave into the curriculum?" This comment is very fair. One of the conversations we came back to again and again was the necessity of balanced approaches. The overall topics of fairness, and promoting equality and equity that is reflective of current legislation, for example, helps to limit personal views. Other students clearly expressed anxiety that there would be negative consequences if they acted as agents of social change: "It is extremely hard to do this in public schools, because of the backlash from parents, administrators, and school boards"; "We are not protected in the Charter for our opinions and our voice is not to be heard. So how can we support this?" In our class we address topics such as "teaching about controversial issues without becoming controversial," and other ways of balancing social and political bias with creating social change. Some candidates, however, clearly still feel that they may have the desire to create social change, but perhaps lack the power to do so. Others felt strongly empowered: "Teachers are in a position of power and are held to a high standard in society, therefore they should be empowered to become activists for change and promote inclusivity"; "Heck yeah we should, we can help make a difference"; "Yes! We as teachers have the opportunity to teach important values and life skills, while creating a positive community in the classroom"; "Sometimes we are the only ally

kids have so this is important"; "Teachers should expose students to a variety of different perspectives and challenge students to think critically about their beliefs." On the question of whether teachers should be "agents of social change," both the numerical and most of the written data from the survey suggest that Teacher Candidates feel they should. The candidates expressed again and again that this is crucial to their mission as teachers.

Question #4: Using Books and Literature to Illustrate Social Issues Is a Good Strategy for the Prevention of Bullying in Classrooms/schools

Quantitative:

Blank /5	1 /5	2 /5	3 /5	4 /5	5/ 5
1	0	1	11	26	51

Teacher Candidates responded very positively to this question, highlighting that the same claims about literature encouraging empathy and highlighting multiple perspectives that make it a useful tool for teacher education, also inform the way we can address issues of bullying amongst students in schools. This question was designed to highlight the connection between equity and social justice theory, and bullying (which is often connected to issues of inequity and injustice as they play out in schools). Teacher Candidates showed that this link was clear to them, and that they knew their job would involve promoting fairness through anti-bullying work in schools.

Qualitative:

Some of the Teacher Candidates' responses were positive about the use of literature, but stressed that they see literature as one part of a full complement of anti-bullying tools and resources: "Lead by example, encourage positive relationships, use books, yes, but social exercises and positive practice more so!"; "I think there are other more effective ways to tackle bullying, but reading about the issue can help us empathize with the bully." The majority of the responses, however, made clear that literature would be absolutely crucial to their anti-bullying efforts: "Students can gain understanding for social issues through many facets and literature is an excellent entry point to introduce some of these complex concepts into the school setting"; "Books and literature can teach a lot about character education and the different roles involved in bullying (bully, victim, bystanders, ally)"; "Books about bullying often get made fun of by children, I find, but books about oppression are very effective." Almost all of the written responses addressed how empathy and multiplicity of perspective are reasons why literature is so important. This was interesting because, through our assignment, we did not address bullying specifically. What this meant was that Teacher Candidates had internalized some of the messaging we were promoting concerning the value of literature to teach equity and diversity subjects, and were applying that view of literature as a tool to other areas of classroom and student management that we had not discussed. Their learning, then, was not only about the usefulness of the content of social equity and diversity learning, but also the form through which that learning takes place. Literature itself became the subject, instead of just the tool.

Question #5: I Would Use Books/literature to Teach about Social Topics in My Classroom

Quantitative:

Blank /5	1 /5	2 /5	3 /5	4 /5	5/ 5
0	0	1	5	21	63

Teacher Candidates clearly felt very favourably towards the use of literature. This question investigates whether they saw it as simply good for their own learning, or whether it would be a tool they would use in turn with their own students. The numerical data suggests that many future teachers will be inspired to use literature in their classrooms to teach about social issues. One of the reasons the high level of these numerical responses is surprising is that the Teacher Candidates reflected all subject areas of Intermediate/Senior teaching. They were not, for the most part, English teachers, and so had not had formal training, for the most part, in the use of literature. This speaks to the success of our project in using literature; it was convincing to the candidates as an important pedagogical tool.

Qualitative:

Teacher Candidates generally responded very favourably in their written feedback on the question of their potential use of literature in their own teaching. Some comments reflected a passion for literature: "Love books/literature – believe in the power of books. Empathy. Understanding. Acceptance." Others, simply valued the way literary texts give way to conversation and other curricular activities: "I think text is a great segway into a discussion"; "Good for the theory part – need the "practice" as with drama activities, writing, participating in community programming, etc." Other responses repeated earlier suggestions that literature

makes approaching these topics more comfortable: "What a great way to approach topics that we may otherwise feel a bit overwhelmed with." This final question is what truly made the team of instructors teaching this course feel that the literature assignment was positive. Not only did it enable the learning of our Teacher Candidates, but it convinced them that using literature will promote learning about equity and diversity in their future students as well.

Overall Comments

The Quantitative feedback shows an impressive level of commitment to creating social change through teaching. Reflecting on their own experience of reading the novel, the majority of Teacher Candidates report that the novel they chose helped them to understand an issue in equity differently. Many candidates also feel that they would, in turn, use literature towards the same ends. As issues of bullying and discrimination are often underwritten by issues of equity and diversity, oppression and marginalization, the novels helped them to see those deeper processes and to engage in an experience well outside of their own. Some of their qualitative feedback, their comments, helps to support this idea. I have included many of the comments. I omitted those that were very similar to comments included below.[8]

The survey invited any further comments about the experience of the assignment, or anything else the candidate wanted to add about using literature to teach about equity and diversity, teachers becoming agents of social change, or anything they wanted to add that was of relevance. Teacher Candidates responded overwhelmingly positively to the assignment, and all of its effects: "I loved learning and having my eyes opened to different perspectives. I had

[8] I have left the comments as they were written on the surveys. Thus there are some grammatical and spelling mistakes. I did not want to impose any editing on the comments; I wanted to let the students' voices speak for themselves.

logically thought about the more marginalized groups of society, but had never really tried "walking in their shoes" or trying to understand what it would be like to be "different" based on race, sex, sexual orientation, class, and ability etc."; "I was an English major so I am a firm believer in the power of literature to shift mindsets. Literature will be an integral part of all the curriculum I teach." "*Funny Boy* is probably one of the best books I have read! I learned so so much about equity issues in the world that I had no idea were happening. I really felt for the main characters and I learned as much from the novel. Some things I learned could not have been taught traditionally. Thank you!" Many of the Teacher Candidates simply expressed appreciation for being introduced to texts they otherwise may not have read.

Our Teacher Candidates have clearly experienced a transformation through their reading, and are interested in transforming others through similar literary study projects. Of course, teachers will use literature in a variety of ways and will not ask their students to reflect on the pedagogical value of these texts, in most cases. Their comments include discussing the value of the "relationship" between reader and text, the learning about equity that can happen through character, and how important teachers are in making such connections with their students. The overwhelmingly positive nature of the numeric and written feedback suggests not only that the learning took place, but also that learning about diversity and equity through literature was enjoyable for our Teacher Candidates – something which, as I describe above, can be a struggle.

It is notable that some of the candidates describe a particular anxiety about speaking about social issues for fear of a teacher imposing a point of view on his/her students, or of legal or other disciplinary consequences from parents or administration. Of course, every teacher must determine what he or she is comfortable doing. Some of us push the boundaries of what is acceptable in the classroom, some feel that social justice and equity are already core to the

curriculum, and some do not wish to entertain these topics. The use of literature can be key for any of these types of teachers who wish to approach controversial subjects without seeming controversial themselves. Letting characters and writers speak for themselves, and eliciting student interpretations and understandings of the characters, is a way to avoid potential litigious or other pitfalls. All schools teach literacy, and in fact value it as among the most important skills. It is my position that critical literacy includes an ability to comprehend characters from very different points of view from the reader's own. Thus literature provides both a "safe," but also provocative, medium for discussing social justice.

The Teacher Candidates' expressions of enjoying the reading on a personal as well as a professional level were notable. The comments are enthusiastic and exuberant. In my own teaching experience, these comments are rare and are reflective of a particular transformative experience. Students are often happy with what they are learning, or challenged and stimulated by curricular material, but the tone of the comments that the students provided suggests a different sort of learning. Some of the Teacher Candidates regard this assignment as the one that was *most* transformative during our course. For them, the medium of literature was most effective in making the topics approachable, and in making text-to-self and text-to-world connections.[9]

The academic literature on text and pedagogy, from theoretical approaches such as Bakhtin's dialogism and heteroglossia, as well as more focused studies such as those by Laraine Wallowitz, Ingrid Johnston, and James Greenlaw, all suggest that literature is an effective means of encouraging students to shift their paradigm through viewing the world in a character's

[9] Literacy instruction in Ontario is currently interested in promoting text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections. Another reason this type of assignment is absolutely in line with the curricular goals of our current educational policy and mandate.

perspective, as well as promoting discussion that interrogates the boundaries between self and other. These objectives serve a larger goal: giving students the tools to recognize and combat injustice. Laraine Wallowitz notes that reading Toni Morrison gave her students the language and context to interrogate, resist (p. 158) and disrupt (161) the "white gaze" many of them had internalized. She concludes that literary texts give her students the communicative capacity for "recognition, resistance, and reconciliation." These are the goals I have for my students as well.

When asked whether teachers should be agents of social change, some of the students responded "Yes!," but others said things like "This is one of the main reasons I want to become a teacher." We all come to the field of education for different reasons, but once we have been practicing as teachers it is apparent that our influence can have a huge impact. As someone committed to fighting for an equitable world, education offers me the opportunity to work with young people who often share my commitments to equity and diversity, and those whom I believe can benefit from contemplating those issues in a deeper way than they have been asked to previously. Literature is an effective forum through which to foster these conversations, and encourage Teacher Candidates to push the boundaries of their knowledge and perspective. It *is* my project to help instill the values of social justice in Teacher Candidates so that they may become agents of social change. Literature is my tool of choice in this pedagogical project.

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Contemplative Practice to Compassionate Learning Community

Developing and Sustaining the Teacher's Inner Life as a Site for Faculty Development

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Abstract

This self-study emerged from the convergence of a reflective practice, a mindfulness meditation practice, and experience designing, facilitating and participating in a teaching and learning book club for college-level educators. The study's central question is, "How does a community of professional educators successfully support its members in their individual reflective practices?" Drawing on Parker J. Palmer's work on the inner life of the teacher and the value of community in a teacher's professional journey, this study is conceptually grounded in scholarly work on mindfulness meditation, communities of practice, and learning communities. It explores the emergence of a *compassionate learning community* as a site for faculty development that attends to the whole person, developing and sustaining the teacher's inner life.

Introduction

> We can make our minds so like still water that beings gather about us that they may see, it may be, their own images, and so live for a moment with a clearer, perhaps even a fiercer life because of our quiet. (Yeats, 1902, p. 136)

This self-study presents reflective practice and collegial exchange of such reflections as sites for faculty development. It explores the relationship between a teacher's inner, contemplative work and the reciprocal expression of that work with colleagues.

I enter this exploration with one central question in mind: *How does a community of professional educators successfully support its members in their individual reflective and contemplative practices?* Inherent in the question is a theme that will recur throughout this exploration, the relationship between the individual and the group. I am guided in this inquiry by my own experiences of mindfulness meditation and by experiences of sharing my reflective practice with colleagues, participating in an interdisciplinary community of college-level educators.

During a period of about four years, working as an educational developer in a department akin to a centre for teaching and learning, I adopted a reflective practice in conjunction with a mindfulness meditation practice. During this same period of time, I designed and implemented a teaching and learning book club for college educators, which developed into what I will refer to in this paper as a compassionate learning community.

For the study, I proposed a theoretical context rooted in the work of Parker J. Palmer. I also drew on scholarly perspectives on mindfulness meditation, communities of practice, and learning communities, as they relate to teacher education and faculty development. I framed the inquiry

with the notion that for teachers to be agents of change in the educational system, and specifically in the learning and development of students, teacher education and faculty development must attend to teachers as whole persons. Developing a reflective practice and sharing our reflections in a compassionate learning community contribute to a whole person approach to faculty development. Through the model of a compassionate learning community proposed in this paper, the teacher's inner life may be developed and sustained.

The paper is divided into several sections. *Reflecting on a professional practice* introduces the central theme of the paper by providing an anecdotal account of an innovative professional development activity for educators. The *Conceptual Context* section presents a theoretical lens through which the research question is filtered, namely, 1) *Faculty development and professional practice,* 2) *Teacher as agent of change,* 3) *Mindfulness meditation,* and 4) *Communities of practice*. The section under the heading *A Compassionate Learning Community* integrates these four conceptual contexts. The *Research Context* section describes the characteristics of the setting in which this study took place, and is followed by the *Methods* section. In the *Discussion* section, the particular compassionate learning community explored in this study is described. The results of the study are summarized in the section entitled *Learning from my self-study*. In the *Conclusion* section, the paper revisits and draws a conclusion from the anecdote introduced in the *Reflecting on a professional practice* section. The *Conclusion* section of the paper closes by reiterating the value, function and need for compassionate learning communities as sites for faculty professional development, to support and sustain the teacher's inner life.

Reflecting on a Professional Practice

What makes it possible to bring your best self to your work? This question was posed to the educators participating in a "Courageous Schools: Teaching and Leading in Tough Times" workshop offered by the Centre for Courage and Renewal in Vermont in 2012. We were given blank cards on which to write our answers and then invited to share our cards in small groups.

Before any of this, the workshop guidelines were established. The "touchstones," as they were called, offered an unconventional way of looking at group ground rules. They invited the formation of a kind of community that I had not yet encountered in a professional context, one that encouraged us to be as present as we could be with ourselves and others, to be optimistic about what we could accomplish in the workshop, to pay attention with great intention, to speak our truths, and to honour each other and the silence (Centre for Courage and Renewal, 2012). The touchstones made being our best selves not only possible but also probable. In these touchstones, I found a sense of wisdom and a deep quiet that surprised me. When I was expecting the guidelines to be more along the lines of, "please switch your mobile devices to vibrate mode; the washrooms are down the hall, and refreshments will be served at 10:30," what I got was a facilitation team and workshop design rooted in something far more profound that honoured the participants down to the very core of our beings. It set a tone of reverence and respect, and encouraged us to turn a similar disposition towards ourselves.

The facilitators urged participants to be true to oneself through the exploration of one's professional practice, to resist quick judgment in order to clearly observe whatever we find. They emphasized that it was equally important that we enter this exploration in the context of a group of peers. This group would serve as a community to witness each person's inner work, not to assess, nor advise, nor fix, but simply to see, hear and be with each person as he/she reflected

and expressed his/her reflections. Because the group was established in this way, and despite the regular frequency of talking one would expect at a day-long workshop, despite even the occasional gregarious activity, I found this workshop surprisingly quiet. That is to say an inner quiet started to take shape in me even while participating in group activities. As a result of this inner quiet I was able to see my work in faculty development more clearly.

Conceptual Context

Faculty Development and Professional Practice

> For teaching to assume the mantle of 'profession' there must be evidence that its members inquire into their own practice, into ways of improving and developing their teaching consistent with the unique contexts in which they work and the current research that pertains to their work as educators. (Clark & Erickson, 2012, p.25)

Inquiry into one's own teaching practice is especially vital in higher education, where most teaching faculty are not formally trained as teachers, but rather as disciplinary or subject matter experts. According to Clark and Erickson, professional practice may be defined in several ways. "Key dimensions common to all definitions include: specialized knowledge, intensive preparation, a code of conduct, an emphasis on continued learning, and the rendering of a public service" (Brown, 2001; Sachs, 1997; Sykes, 1990 in Clark & Erickson, 2012, p.24). This inquiry is particularly interested in the continued learning aspects of Clark's & Erickson's common dimensions of a professional practice. While courses, conferences and seminars have their purpose and place in developing specialized knowledge for professional educators, this inquiry explores sustained faculty development, grounded in a professional practice, that focuses on

continuous cycles of reflection, action, and contemplation, and the community of colleagues that can help sustain the individual teacher's development. Within the context of an educational mission focussed on providing learning opportunities that develop the whole person, the teacher fills the role of agent of change for her students' and her own development.

Teacher as Agent of Change

The phrase "teacher as agent of change" may be interpreted in a number of ways. Critical theorists will be inclined to read social change and emancipatory meaning into this phrase. Educational administrators and policy makers may interpret this phrase as referring to systemic changes in the way educational institutions are organized and managed, drawing on teacher leadership to effect sustainable change. Pedagogical researchers may find in this phrase a reference to innovation or reinventions in teaching and learning practices. For the purpose of this study, my take on the phrase relates to the moral purpose of education to foster the development of the whole person, which includes the cognitive (mind), affective (heart) and somatic (body) realms, and beyond these realms, the spiritual, social, and ethical. "The teacher's inner life, that is linked to his/her decisions, acting and behaviour (including what he/she attends to), is an important aspect of teaching as a moral endeavour, and working on one's inner life is a way for teachers to be responsive to the moral purpose of teaching" (Falkenberg, 2012, p. 27).

This development of the whole person is certainly not limited to formal education, nor to the years during which the average individual attends higher education. It is a life-long process of development and learning. Nevertheless, formal education is an important site for setting members of a society on this path of life-long learning and personal development, and for creating the citizens who will re-shape and re-form society. In order to shape and form a healthy,

peaceful, creative and productive society, the individuals in it must learn to value and practice healthy, peaceful, creative and productive thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. Nel Noddings articulates the moral mission of education in this way.

> Our society does not need to make its children first in the world in mathematics and science. It needs to care for its children – to reduce violence, to respect honest work of every kind, to reward excellence at every level, to ensure a place for every child and emerging adult in the economic and social world, to produce people who can care competently for their own families and contribute effectively to their communities. […] I have argued that our main educational aim should be to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving and lovable people. (Noddings, 1995)

These concepts apply equally to the ways in which we design education for our students and the ways faculty development is conceived in service to teachers and their development as whole persons and as professional educators.

A practice of mindfulness meditation contributes to the development of the individual's health and well-being. It can also foster compassion within the practitioner and can lead to a wide range of benefits in one's personal and professional relationships. In approaching education holistically, to develop the whole person, mindfulness meditation offers a valuable and holistic, mind-heart-body approach.

Mindfulness Meditation

"Spiritual traditions can provide unique perspective on learning" (Miller, 2006, p. 3). Meditative practices found in many world religions, both Eastern and Western traditions, are increasingly being adopted by and adapted for secular institutions. Mindfulness meditation in

particular has been taken up by the Health Sciences; a significant and growing body of research has been generated on the positive effects of mindfulness practice on physical and mental health, from both preventative and treatment perspectives (Kabat-Zinn, 2003).

Mindfulness can be defined as, "a concept from Buddhism that stresses focus, intention, and awareness of whatever is present in a situation or experience. […] Mindfulness itself is antithetical to cruelty and bears a natural affinity to compassion" (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998, p.171). It is a practice of directing nonjudgmental attention and noticing to the present moment, to the movements in one's mind-heart-body and in one's present environment (Schoeberlein, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 2005).

> The value of non-judgmental awareness lies in its capacity to help us 'observe' what goes on within us (our inner life); whenever we move into judging what we become aware of [is] the sense of it being good or bad, helpful or not, we move away from attending to our inner life (observing) to thinking about (judging) ideas, experiences, feelings, and so forth. (Falkenberg, 2012, p. 30)

Suspending judgment or reaction to a thought, feeling, or situation allows us to see things as they really are, not through the layered lens of how we would like things to be. Mindfulness meditation is not easy for the mind that is in the habit of constantly discerning, deciding and reacting to life situations and interactions. Through practice we develop the ability to still the mind; this stillness of the mind can be applied to our daily living with openness, curiosity, and kindness. "Mindfulness promotes resilience and enhances social and emotional competence. […] Combined with empathy, kindness, and compassion [it] supports constructive action and caring behaviour" (Schoeberlein, 2009, p. 178).

The effects of mindfulness meditation on the brain have been documented extensively in the literature. "Preliminary evidence demonstrates that mindfulness increases positive affect as measured by self-report and physiological indicators" (Shapiro & Carlson, 2009, p. 124). A connection between mind, heart and body is drawn in this work in which positive emotions are believed to improve thinking and behavioural repertoires (Shapiro & Carlson, 2009, p. 124). Brain imaging taken while Tibetan Buddhist monks engaged in compassion meditation revealed higher levels of activation in the areas of the brain concerned with the generation of positive emotions, when compared to the brains of people not trained in meditation (Lutz, Greischar, Rawlings, Ricard & Davidson, 2004 as cited in Shapiro & Carlson, 2009, p. 125).

Mindfulness research as applied within the world of teacher education and faculty development is a relatively new area of investigation. Educational research on mindfulness has largely examined the effects it has on *student* learning. While student learning is at the centre of our educational mission, their learning lives in relationship with the teaching and learning practices of professional educators.

In a programmatic study at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), pre-service teachers were offered a semester-long course in which they were trained in "Mindfulness-based Wellness Education" or MBWE, which was based on Kabat-Zinn's Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR) programs (Soloway, Poulin & Mackenzie, 2011, p.220). Course participants practiced mindfulness meditation throughout the course. They wrote regular memos that contributed to an arts-based process for developing wellness strategies that would sustain them through the stress, demands and challenges of the teaching profession (Soloway et al., 2011). A pre-service teacher in the MBWE course reported, "My attitude and

mind-set can be picked up by the students and when I present myself as a balanced and mindful teacher, the students will respond in a calmer manner" (Soloway et al., 2011).

"The qualities, or attitude, one brings to the act of paying attention are crucial. For example, attention can have a cold, critical quality, or it can include an openhearted compassionate quality" (Shapiro & Carlson, 2009, p. 11). Jon Kabat-Zinn describes mindfulness as "not just a bare attention but an *affectionate* attention" (as cited in Shapiro & Carlson, 2009, p. 11). This affection is the work of the heart. Mindfulness practice is not merely a practice of the mind; it joins the mind, the heart, and the body in attending to the present moment. "Heart and mind are the same word in Asian languages" (Shapiro & Carlson, 2009, p. 11); because of this linguistic effect, mindfulness may also be translated as heartfulness (Shapiro & Carlson, 2009).

Importantly, non-judgmental awareness allows us to notice what is happening within ourselves, the inner life, without assigning value or meaning of any kind to what we notice (Falkenberg, 2012). In this mode there is no concept attached to what we see within ourselves; we simply see it and observe it, as it is. Insight meditation is based on watching the arising and passing away of thoughts, feelings, and sensations (Miller, 1994). This watching of our mind-heart-body is meant to be approached with an attitude of curiosity. "Feelings are sometimes so powerful that they take over, and we lose our basic awareness of what is happening" (Miller, 1994, p. 60). If we approach our mindfulness practice with curiosity rather than a problem-solving attitude, we will see that strong emotion does subside, especially when we pause to observe it. When we come to this realization through our direct experience, we learn that in fact the strong emotion is not *who* we are and it need not dictate how we behave. Our behaviour in relationship with others is fertile ground for our continuous learning, especially when we intentionally engage in relationship within a community.

Communities of Practice

According to Lave and Wenger, a community of practice "[does not] imply necessarily co-presence, a well-defined group, or socially visible boundaries. It does imply participation in an activity system about which participants share understandings concerning what they are doing" (1991, in Barab & Duffy, n.d., p. 36). A community of practice is a group with a shared interest and purpose, with members from the same or multiple institutions and affiliations. It may be strictly exclusive or highly inclusive, specialized or interdisciplinary, and may meet in person, online, both, or not at all (Wenger, 1998; Westphalen, 2012). "Communities of practice are not good or bad in themselves. They can be a source of problems – such as exclusion, inbreeding, narrowness – as much as a key to solutions" (Wenger, 1996, p. 26).

"Our institutions are largely based on the assumption that learning is an individual process, that it has a beginning and an end, that it is best separated from the rest of our activities, and that teaching is required for learning to occur" (Wenger, 1996, p. 21). As a response to this mistaken set of assumptions, Wenger proposes a learning organization in which "informal learning activities are recognized, respected and encouraged" (1996, p. 21). One of Wenger's principles for informal learning is that learning is fundamentally social (Wenger, 1996). Even when we are learning independently and privately, we make sense of our learning using the language and images of our society, which we learned in a social context (Wenger, 1996). Wenger further proposes that learning changes who we are (Wenger, 1996). By developing a professional practice and evolving as a practitioner an individual is engaged with questions about his/her professional identity (Wenger, 1996). As we learn new practices, our identities shift and we come to know ourselves in new ways (Wenger, 1996). While these rubrics are helpful for framing our notions of professional communities of practice, they do not point explicitly to the

value of relationship to, and within a community of peers; they refer to "community" more abstractly, with less emphasis on personal connection in relationship.

Scardamalia's and Bereiter's concept of "knowledge building" fits into a general notion of a community of practice, taking the activity of the community to the point of developing new, reinvented, or recast knowledge, that is made broadly available (2003). They contend that, "[l]earning is an internal, unobservable process that results in changes of belief, attitude, or skill. Knowledge building, by contrast, results in the creation or modification of public knowledge—knowledge that lives 'in the world' and is available to be worked on and used by other people" (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2003). The individual members of these knowledge building learning communities are perhaps more tangibly engaged with each other than in some communities of practice, but may not necessarily ever meet. The notion of a compassionate learning community has developed from this self-study; it is proposed as an extension from established understandings of professional communities of practice.

A Compassionate Learning Community

> Long before community assumes external shape and form, it must be present as seed in the undivided self; only as we are in communion with ourselves can we find community with others. Community is […] the flowing of personal identity and integrity into the world of relationships. (Palmer, 2007, p.92)

In this self-study, theories of faculty development, the teacher as an agent of change, the practice of mindfulness meditation, and theories of communities of practice inform the conceptual development of a compassionate learning community. The particular compassionate learning

community that is discussed in this paper gathers in the form of a teaching and learning book club. This group is in the early stages of development, and thus, the concept of a compassionate learning community will most likely continue to evolve with the community's evolutions. As part of this emerging concept, mindfulness meditation is treated as an integral tool for the professional educator's reflective practice. The inner work and reflective practice of individual educators serve the moral purpose of education, to educate the whole person, and, as such, position the teacher as an agent of change. This inner work is enhanced when it is shared in a supportive peer environment, a compassionate learning community.

The compassionate learning community in this case is neither to be confused with a therapeutic group, nor a workplace practice of venting negative comments, gossip, and complaints. The community of which I speak in this exploration is one of mindful non-judgment, in which compassion is the default approach.

The compassionate learning community is modelled after the principles of a "Circle of Trust" as developed by Parker J. Palmer (2004). These principles centre around "being alone together" (Palmer, 2004, p. 51). They recognize the importance of finding and listening to one's inner voice (Palmer, 2007). Once we have learned to hear our inner voice, it can become our greatest teacher, a profound place for personal and professional learning (Palmer, 2007). "The *teacher within* [is] the voice that invites me to honour the nature of my true self" (Palmer, 2007, p. 30, emphasis in original text). Palmer proposes that the true self knows its vocational calling, the work that will make a person's heart sing (Palmer, 2007). While we may not always have the privilege to choose work that is well aligned with the true self, our "conversation" with the teacher within helps us to stay connected to who we really are (Palmer, 2007). "We attend to the inner teacher not to get fixed but to befriend the deeper self, to cultivate a sense of identity and

integrity that allow us to feel at home wherever we are" (Palmer, 2007, p.33). Bentz and Shapiro, in their work on mindful inquiry, entreat us to "be aware of [our] own mind and that, especially at moments of confusion, doubt, disappointment, or despair, [we] look diligently at [our] own mind" (1998, p. 168). Once we learn to see our minds and hearts as they are, without reacting to what we see, we are better prepared to share challenges and troublesome stirrings that may arise in our teaching lives.

This inner work is deeply personal and for some very private, but the learning that can happen when such inner work is shared in a safe and supportive space -- a compassionate learning community -- is significant. The reflective practice has an important role to play in faculty professional development, in supporting the teacher as an agent of change, because at the heart of reflective practice is the question: Is my work good and worthwhile? This question touches the boundaries between professional and personal identity and the true self. When our work *is* good and worthwhile, we *feel* good and worthwhile. I am not proposing that one's professional identity and level of success at work be treated as defining factors in one's worth as a person; but, the feelings we experience in relation to how well or poorly we do at work can contribute to our sense of self, whether or not this sense is justified. "Feeling worthy allows us to be more magnanimous and then feelings of kindness, love and generosity come more easily" (Mipham, 2012). When we feel worthy and good we are better prepared to do our best work. Engaging in a compassionate learning community facilitates the individual educator's reflective practice, providing a safe space to explore his/her reflections, to be heard, and if he/she wishes, to receive constructive and supportive feedback from trusted colleagues.

Moreover, when we practice mindfulness meditation, we become more adept at connecting with the true self, just as we are, and, in turn, we are better able to encounter others, just as they

are, with compassion, without judgment. This is essential to creating genuinely safe space in which we can be present to each other's inner journeys, reflective practices and the evolutions of our professional practices as educators. "Adorno (1974) enjoined us to 'regard all things as they present themselves from the standpoint of redemption'" (as cited in Bentz & Shapiro, 1998, p. 166). "By redemption he means whatever historical, social, or political process would eliminate the domination and exploitation that keeps things from being in accord with their potential and thereby would "free" people and things to be what they truly are" (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998, p. 167). Mindfulness meditation intentionally cultivates loving kindness and compassion for all beings. Without *trying* to love, simply setting our intention in that direction, and through disciplined mindfulness practice, we can learn to know and love the true self, in ourselves and in others.

When we share our inner work, we stand to learn from others by hearing their reflections on their journeys, struggles, and triumphs. But more importantly, we have the opportunity to learn more deeply from ourselves, to hear ourselves as we speak our own stories into the caring silence and companioning presence of the group. When we have the chance to work with a great mentor, we must not ask what the mentor taught us, but what we were able to learn at the time in our life when we had the good fortune to encounter this mentor (Palmer, 2007). So it is in a compassionate learning community. The focus is on learning *from* the *self*. Faculty development in such a community is not a socio-constructivist learning project in the conventional sense of collaborating to create knowledge together. Each individual is constructing his/her own knowledge, and this knowledge construction is occurring in a social context among peers. While the social aspect of this knowledge construction may influence what knowledge is built, the nature of the knowledge is predominantly personal and individual. Specifically what knowledge

each person learns or constructs from the experience of a compassionate learning community may not even be shared with the other members of the group, but the group is an integral part of the individual learning.

A compassionate learning community is a natural extension to a reflective practice. As we mindfully become aware of and learn to listen to the inner voice, the teacher within, the compassionate learning community is a space in which we can receive confirmation that, in fact, we and our work *are* worthy. Furthermore, in the compassionate learning community we can contribute to our profession in new ways, offer the gift of listening to and grappling with our colleagues' ideas and reflections, and learn and create new knowledge together.

Research Context

This study takes place in a large, urban, publicly funded college in Canada that serves a diverse population of adult and emerging adult learners. As an educational developer who works in the equivalent of a centre for teaching and learning that serves approximately seven hundred tenured and sessional faculty, I sought to establish an interdisciplinary community of practice for college educators. I set out to create a space for informal learning between and among colleagues who may not have had the chance to meet, owing to the size of the college and the systematic grouping of faculty along disciplinary lines.

Figure 1. "Room 700" where the Teaching and Learning Book Club meets.

Photo credit: Julie Mooney, 2012

The format of this initiative is a teaching and learning book club that invites faculty and professional staff to read a variety of books and articles relating to pedagogy, learning, and the teaching life. The book club is set up as a monthly drop-in, wine and cheese gathering. It meets in a room with upholstered chairs and sofas, and many plants along a wall of west-facing windows that offer passive solar heat in the afternoon. The space is inviting and casual. (See Figure 1.)

Methods

This study emerged from an educational developer's professional practice at a moment when her scholarly reading, reflective practice, mindfulness meditation practice, and a faculty development initiative converged, both conceptually and in time. The methods used were loosely based on a self-study model. The focus of this paper is predominantly a description of the theoretical context and the design of a teaching and learning book club as a site for faculty development, rather than a focus on data collection and analysis. The researcher and the

educational developer who designed and implemented the teaching and learning book club are one and the same person.

As a self-study, attention was given exclusively to the researcher's experiences and the theoretical context in which she situates the reflections on her experiences. This study does not attempt to report or analyse the experiences or perspectives of the other book club participants. While participants in the book club were not treated as research participants, their interactions with the researcher undoubtedly influenced her reflections on the design and evaluation of the teaching and learning book club as a site for faculty development and a potential community of practice.

Nevertheless, the teaching and learning book club was not designed to be a site for research data collection. Data presented in this paper was culled retrospectively from the researcher's reflective notes and recollections. As such, the study is considered a preliminary investigation into the research question. Further investigation would be valuable in order to analyse the experiences and personal or professional outcomes of other participants in the teaching and learning book club.

Discussion

> Mindful of Cochran-Smyth and Lytle's (1993) caution about the potential insularity of self-study practitioners, it is important that the knowledge and practices generated within these communities is shared across the broader educational community. Public dissemination is particularly important as self-study – largely a case-based literature – is enriched by peer commentary and critique. (Clarke & Erickson, 2012, p. 26)

It is in this spirit that I am compelled to write about my experience of a college-level teaching and learning book club and the role it has played in my personal and professional development as an educator.

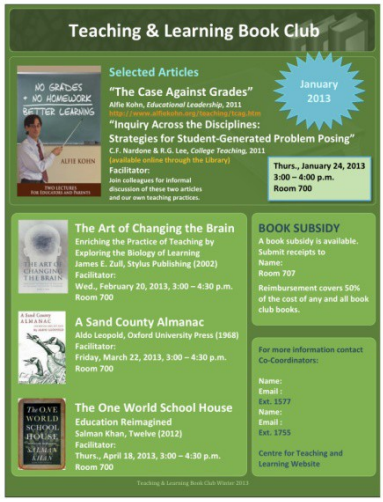
In the large urban college context where this self-study takes place, I reinitiated a mindfulness meditation practice that had been dormant for a few years. My first experience of meditation was in yoga class twice a week. We did both sitting and laying down meditations. Despite my busy mind during meditation, I always felt refreshed and mentally calm after these meditations and noticed that, returning to work after yoga meditation, I was better able to manage stressful situations. In 2010, I took a Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR) course modelled after Jon Kabat-Zinn's course by the same name. During that ten-week course, I practised daily mindfulness meditation, trying various modes of meditation including sitting, standing, lying down, and walking. I experimented with the body scan meditation, which invariably put me to sleep; I would wake to the sound of the bell on the audio recording. The mountain and lake guided meditations transported my mind to serene naturally beautiful places, offering rich metaphors for the range of feelings and thoughts I observed within. The loving-kindness meditation guided me to repeat a mantra, wishes of well-being directed towards myself, another person, a group of people, and all living beings. That transition from the inward focus on self, to the external focus on a particular person or group, to a general attention to all living creatures reminded me of the teaching tool "think-pair-share" and got me wondering, once more, about how my mindfulness practice relates to my professional practice.

In the winter of 2012, I launched the Teaching & Learning Book Club at the college. I selected books that had either inspired me or been recommended by colleagues, I invited colleagues to co-facilitate the book club meetings with me, and I sent out posters to all faculty

and all professional staff inviting them to participate in any one or all of the monthly meetings (See Figure 2). No registration was required, a fund to pay half the cost of book club books was extended to all participants, wine and cheese catering was arranged, and everyone was welcome to attend the meetings, whether or not they had read the books.

While offering a structured meeting time and place, as well as a focus on one reading, I aimed to keep the book club informal. My not-so-hidden agenda was the building of community across the disciplines, a community of practice in which college educators could explore their own professional practices through discussion of pedagogical theories, teacher memoirs, proposed teaching and learning innovations, and other themes that emerged from the readings.

Figure 2. Example of poster distributed to promote the teaching and learning book club.



The response to this book club project was positive, but not overwhelming. Five to eight people attended each month, with some regulars and some new participants at each meeting. The discussions we had were honest, reflective, professional and personal. The open-minded, open-hearted community atmosphere I had hoped for was taking shape and members of the group

started to take ownership for their book club, suggesting books for the next semester, making plans to blog about the discussions we were having, and inviting their colleagues to join in. Those who attended were often meeting each other for the first time. Many expressed curiosity about how things are done in the other's department, revealing the extent to which disciplines have been divided into silos. I started to receive reports of various discussions about the book club books, discussions that were happening spontaneously, beyond the regular scheduled meetings. Through a formal online evaluation and informal conversations, the resounding message was that the book club should continue in the fall 2012. So it did, and it continues still.

Like any good project, there were obstacles to overcome and issues with the structure and design. In particular, the informal structure left a gap in group cohesion. Its advantage was that it placed no pressure on anyone to attend and, therefore, only those who were keen to participate did. It also meant that each person was there on his/her own, for individual reasons or needs. Conversely, it meant that our membership was fluid; each meeting tended to start at the initial introduction stage, a dynamic that has the potential to become tiresome for regular members. As need arose, returning members would brief new members on any references that were made to previous discussions. Group cohesion was not evident, but collegiality was. It seemed that everyone was there for individual interests and the building of this fluid community was a welcome, although seemingly incidental, outcome.

What surprised me about my experience of this informal community was the quality and personal outcomes of my own participation in it. I was practising mindfulness meditation throughout this time period, and bringing my mindful attention to my participation in the book club. When I shared my teaching experiences of trouble and triumph, I listened to the way in which I told my stories. I heard myself representing my professional practice to my colleagues,

not just on one occasion, but at several book club meetings. This space, despite the fluidity of its membership, had become a safe haven for the sharing of my professional practice; it was serving as a compassionate learning community[1] in which I could deepen my reflective practice about my work as an educator. I placed my trust in my colleagues, even those I had never met before, and they rewarded me for taking the risk to tell my stories by listening attentively without judgement and without rushing to my rescue when I was caught in a snare of uncertainty, or muddling through a difficult realization about myself. Perhaps without knowing it, the book club members became important companions to my professional and reflective practices. This compassionate learning community grew into, or rather emerged as, a site for my personal and professional development as an educator.

Figure 3. Example of book club discussion questions prepared by the facilitator.

Discussion Questions
Teaching and Learning Book Club
March 2012

hooks, b. (2003). *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. Routledge. USA.

1. What does it mean to create community with students?
2. How do/can we engage in relationships of integrity with our students, relationships in which our differences are acknowledged?
3. As a teacher, if I am a person of privilege (white, middle-class, male, able-bodied, first-language English speaker, etc…) how do/can I relate to my students who do not benefit from the same privilege?
4. As a teacher, if I am a person who does not benefit from privilege (white, middle-class, male, able-bodied, first-language English speaker, etc…), how do/can I relate to my students who do?
5. What does it mean to me to practice "radical openness"?
6. What is the point in being a "democratic educator"?
7. Is there a place for love in the teacher-student relationship?

[1] It was only in reflecting on and writing about the experience afterwards that the language of "compassionate learning community" occurred to me.

Figure 4. Example of a book club handout prepared by the facilitator and posted to the teaching and learning online forum, following the meeting at which this book was discussed.

Book Club Notes - Advice for Teachers from

Cain, Susan. (2012). *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking.* Crown Publishing Group. USA. p. 255-257, 265.

1. Introversion does not need to be cured
    a. It is helpful to coach an introvert child in the development of social skills, but learn to value their contributions, even if they are not the verbal kind
2. One third to a half of people are introverts, even if some are strategically pseudo-extroverts
    a. This means you have more introverts in your class than you may realize
    b. Try to balance your class activities to include: for extroverts use movement, stimulation, collaborative work, and for introverts, lectures, quiet downtime and independent projects.
3. Introverts often have one or two deep interests or passions that may not be popular topics, nor shared in common with peers. The intensity that others perceive in introverts can be harnessed to develop great talent. Praise students for their interests and encourage them to find like-minded friends.
4. Some collaborative work is beneficial to introverts, especially in groups of 2 or 3, in which they have the chance for deep, emotionally intimate discussion, and especially when roles are clearly defined within the group.
5. Face-to-face contact is important, but group dynamics contain unavoidable impediments to creative thinking. Allow time for individual reflection, individual writing of ideas and then transition to sharing in group, in order to maximize the breadth and creativity of ideas presented.
6. Teach all students to work independently, because mastery is not possible without sustained work alone (Anders Ericsson).
7. Allow quiet students to sit in less active parts of the classroom. This will assist them with the concentration and quiet they need to do their best work.
8. Make it easy for introverted students to participate in class, but don't insist on it. Forcing this could increase apprehension and reduce self-esteem (James McCroskey).
9. If admission to a program involves audition or interviews, think twice before basing the entire decision on applicants' performance. Many introverts do not perform at their best in groups of strangers. Better to offer opportunities for them to demonstrate their competence in relaxed, comfortable, and familiar settings.
10. Enjoy your gregarious and participatory students, but remember to cultivate the sensitive, autonomous ones with less popular interests.

Learning from My Self-study

Cognisant of the limitations of a self-study, which is based exclusively on one person's experience, further work is needed to explore the concept of a compassionate learning community as a site for developing and sustaining the teacher's inner life. However, some concrete learning can be gleaned from this, albeit preliminary, study.

1. The book club served as a sufficiently informal and, therefore, useful pretext for building a compassionate learning community. Reading the books contributed to my understanding of my professional practice; discussing the themes in the books with other educators created an opportunity for the compassionate learning community to emerge;
2. The interdisciplinary nature of the book club membership added a positive and productive element to the conversations and stories we shared, because contributions were made from each person's own context. There is richness in engaging with contexts that are unfamiliar to our own;
3. In a large institution, where it is not possible to connect with all of one's colleagues, small groups form naturally and necessarily;
4. The quiet inside that I access when I practice mindfulness meditation, and the mindful living that develops as a result of this practice, are the doorways to hearing my inner voice, the *teacher within*. This *teacher within* is a source of wisdom that enables me to become an agent of change in my professional practice;
5. When we bring our own inner quiet to a professional compassionate learning community, that stillness serves as a gift to the group and to each individual member. It provides the necessary pause to help each person see oneself as one is, without rushing to change or alter oneself. Because the group members are consciously, compassionately listening, without

judgment, the individual is invited to do the same, to hear one's own story as one tells it, to listen to oneself consciously, compassionately and without judgment.

Conclusion

A reflective practice paired with a mindfulness meditation practice, and the opportunity to share one's reflections in a compassionate learning community, contribute to a whole person approach to faculty development. Through the model of a compassionate learning community proposed in this paper, the teacher's inner life and identity as a professional educator may be developed and sustained.

At the "Courageous Schools" workshop in Vermont that I attended in 2012, the answer I wrote on my blank card, to the question asking what makes it possible to bring my best self to my work, was threefold: 1) a quiet space and time to think, read, dream, imagine, conceptualize[2], 2) an environment that values creativity, 3) colleagues and superiors who trust me and have confidence in my abilities. I would now add: 4) a compassionate learning community that makes safe space for sharing our reflective practices with the goal of becoming ever-better at attending to our inner lives and to developing the educator as a whole person.

We "inhabit a world in which status, income, and self-esteem depend more than ever on the ability to meet the demands of the Culture of Personality. The pressure to entertain, to sell ourselves, and never to be visibly anxious keeps ratcheting up" (Cain, 2012, p. 31). Teaching well is hard work, even for those who feel they were born to teach. "The same person who teaches brilliantly one day can be an utter flop the next!" (Palmer, 2007, p. 69) Compassionate

[2] This challenges the cultural norm that expects an "open door policy." Cain's 2012 work on introverts in Western culture suggests that we overlook the value of our introverted peers, who need periods of quiet to do their best work, meaning that sometimes doors must be closed either literally, metaphorically or both.

learning communities, and the individual inner work they encourage, are needed to support the professional development of educators because these communities help to shift the paradigm from relentless competition and dogged independence, toward an interdependent learning organization that values risk-taking, mistake-making, and mindful reflection on how we can more consistently bring our best selves to the professional role of educator.

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Critical Pedagogy and Personal History

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Abstract

This paper examines education and poverty in an inner city school through an on-site curriculum and instruction course offered within the scope of a one year post-baccalaureate teacher education program. Based on the transformative framework of critical pedagogy coupled with personal history, this article explores pre-service teachers' beliefs and practices when observing and teaching underrepresented populations. Through a critical pedagogy framework, teacher candidates were encouraged to reflect upon cultural knowledge, self-knowledge, and habits of mind. As indicated in the literature, the creation of these reflective communities of learning could pave the way for an agency of change negating inequalities and social injustices in the schools. Conclusions point to the importance of providing solid foundational resources and training to future teacher candidates when dealing with underrepresented populations.

Critical Pedagogy and Teacher Education

This paper examines education and poverty in an inner city school through an on-site curriculum and instruction course offered within the scope of a one year post-baccalaureate teacher education program. Based on the transformative framework of critical pedagogy coupled with personal history, this article explores preservice teachers' beliefs and practice when observing and teaching underrepresented populations. Through a critical pedagogy framework, teacher candidates were encouraged to reflect upon socio-economic contexts, cultural knowledge, self-knowledge, and habits of mind. As indicated in the literature, the creation of these reflective communities of learning could pave the way for an agency of change negating inequalities and social injustices in the schools.

Critical theory literature examines the multiple social relationships of race, class and gender in schools and in society (Kanpol & McLaren, 1995; Kanpol, 1999; Giroux, 1983). This conceptualization provides a lens through which traditional educational practices based on the technocratic limitations of class size, space, official curriculum, political agendas, linear teaching and learning can be renegotiated. The conscious act of applying critical theory to an educational context is referred to as critical pedagogy (Kanpol, 1999; Kanpol and McLaren, 1995). Taking its roots in Western Marxist philosophy and postmodern ideals of emancipation and libratory approaches to teaching and learning, critical pedagogy provides a forum in which teacher candidates reflect on, identify and question dominant ideology. By recognizing that public institutions covet the reproduction of the economic, political, social and cultural mores of a dominant worldview, teacher candidates develop awareness of the lack of opportunities available to those *other, hidden* voices which populate their classrooms. Within the scope of critical literature, research has demonstrated how teachers' roles may vary and may serve either to

reinforce race, class, and gender inequities or, alternately, to validate multiple understandings and ways of being (Ball and Tyson, 2011). Grant and Gibson (2011) reviewed studies that demonstrate how teachers' class, race, and gender impacted on their worldviews, values and educational practices. These differences were representative of distinctive socio-economic and cultural demarcations which either ensured or negated life chances of underrepresented populations. These demarcations or codes are considered to be intrinsic beliefs, traditions and behaviours found in curriculum, textbooks, practice and policy which validate and reproduce mainstream ideology. This reinforcement of dominant group values, in social institutions like schools, is normalized and recognized as a necessity for success in society (Delpit, 2006). These studies concluded that the best predictor of success in urban schools is teachers' life experiences, attitudes and disposition towards difference and their commitment to embody democratic and inclusive pedagogical practices.

However, research also recognizes that despite these emancipatory praxis-oriented approaches, most teachers still adhere to beliefs that strengthen institutionalized racism, white privilege and normative narratives of identity (Haberman & Post, 1992; Villegas & Lewis, 1994). Within the North American educational context, it is recognized that teachers have had little preparation for working in culturally diverse classrooms and even less exposure to concepts relating to critical pedagogy and critical multiculturalism (Nieto, 2004; Villegas & Lewis, 2002; Shariff, 2008). While a teacher's race and ethnicity does not guarantee success, all teachers can be better prepared for teaching by bridging the gap between demographics, experiences and cultural values (Ball, 2009).

Personal History and Pre-service Teachers

Gay (2003) states that stories are fundamental for understanding our approaches to teaching and learning, as 'narratives are essential to the purpose of communicating who we are, what we do, how we feel and why we ought to follow some course of action rather than another' (p. 5). Gay highlights the significance of personal self-reflection, narratives, storied research and autobiography in developing a critical pedagogy, since 'who we are as people determines the personality of our teaching'. Likewise, bell hooks (1994) writes that 'maintaining awareness of class differences, nurturing ties with poor and working class people...transforms and enriches our intellectual experience'. In this respect, self-examination becomes tantamount to understanding and accepting difference and otherness in educational contexts.

When pre-service teachers recognize their own racial and socio-economic background and reflect on the impact of power and privilege in their personal histories, they can appreciate the complexities surrounding teaching and learning afforded to marginalized and oppressed student populations. When they do not acknowledge the privilege afforded by their race and socio-economic class, the development of transformative pedagogy based on democratic and equitable principles of fairness become difficult to implement. For this reason, personal biographies and the articulation of race and culture can provide evidence of how the inadvertent perpetuation of dominant ideology occurs through curriculum, policy and mandated didactic resources (Heilman, 2003).

School Experiences in Low Socio-Economic Contexts

Pre-service teachers, being aware of the socio-economic and cultural diversity of students, are under increasing pressure to adjust their practices in ways that respond to the

heterogeneity of the school population. As stated in research, they recognize that the school experiences of students of low socio-economic backgrounds show that far from providing opportunities for upward mobility, schools routinely exclude children from non-dominant cultural backgrounds (Delpit, 2006; Giroux, 1992; Kanpol & McLaren, 1995; Kincheloe, 2005; Kozol, 1991; Shor, 1992). However, often this adjustment translates to half-hearted attempts to be non-discriminatory by negating color and culture, and by promoting pseudo-democratic views despite obvious differences in school populations. Despite best intentions, by ignoring student differences, the teacher is in fact disregarding one of the most salient features of a student's identity. This indifference inadvertently promotes a disconnection from the school culminating in a disengagement with scholastic content and resulting in lower academic and social achievement (Dei, 1996; Gay, 2003; Giroux, 1992; Howard, 2003; Kanpol, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1995; 2006).

The present study set out to examine the beliefs and practice of preservice students enrolled in an on-site curriculum and instruction course offered in a one year teacher education program. In keeping with the normative rhetoric of contemporary pedagogy, a sense of commitment to democratic, fair ideals resonated through the teacher education program. One of the vision statements of the University is to "prepare graduates to be agents of change (p.4) and distinguish itself as an institution that respects cultural distinction and self-determination" (Academic Plan, p. 7). Within this lens of this emancipatory discourse, pre-service students were introduced to critical pedagogy as a means to examine the complex relationships of race, class and gender in schools and in society. Based on the framework of critical pedagogy, teacher candidates were encouraged to reflect on, to identify and to question traditional practices which tend to emphasize the reproduction of economic, political, social and cultural mores. By

embarking on critical reflection, teacher candidates were encouraged to recognize the needs of culturally diverse students and to acknowledge the barriers of working with students from diverse socio-economic and racial backgrounds. Through a personal history assignment focusing on cultural knowledge, self-knowledge, habits of mind, and reflective communities of practice, we hoped to gain insights into these teachers' beliefs regarding teaching and learning in a diverse urban context. We sought to explore how these teachers could carve out liminal spaces in their practice to ensure the success of students in low socio-economic contexts.

Methods of Inquiry

Progressive critical tradition in educational theory examines the intersection of life history and significant experiences on the personal, the political, the theory and the practice of teachers (Heilman, 2003). In particular, personal history self-study is acknowledged as an emergent methodology in teacher educators' personal and professional growth. Through this approach, educators can examine self-knowing and professional identity formation in their practice and its impact on student learning. This type of critical reflection provides opportunities for modelling reflection and seeking alternate rhetoric to improve practice (Samaras, Hicks, Garvey Berger, 2007).

Since personal history self-study is founded upon the belief that teaching is fundamentally an autobiographical act, self-knowledge is important for transforming pedagogy and practice. Researchers acknowledge that when reflection is missing from teacher education programs, teacher candidates adopt a technocratic rational approach in the classroom, unaware of the impact of the pedagogical and moral consequences of their actions (Gay, 2003; Heilman, 2003; hooks, 1994; Laboskey, 2007; Pinnegar, 1998). By reconstructing significant life events

and analyzing these circumstances, preservice teachers can embark on the path of developing professional identity and integrity by exploring pathways between knowledge and practice, particularly in compromised educational contexts commonly found in low-income, culturally diverse urban schools.

Similarly to critical pedagogy, research in personal history can also explore key issues regarding the influence of race, culture, and gender in teaching and learning. As a unique form of reflection, personal history self-study can delve into unexamined assumptions, privileges, and beliefs that drive curriculum and assessment. This methodology can forge new ways of understanding the self in the world juxtaposed with the multiplicity of perspectives that alternately inform or deform practice. In light of this, critical pedagogy provides a suitable lens through which to analyze personal history, self-knowledge and its impact on practice in urban contexts.

At the end of the on-site curriculum and instruction course, students completed an assignment based on personal history which identified experiences related to race and class. Using an inductive approach guided by ideas about "grounded theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) documentation stemming from a final assignment was thematically coded. Using the "constant comparative method" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), existing literature was used to generate plausible hypotheses to characterize the nature and process of the development of beliefs regarding teaching and learning in a diverse, urban context. Those ideas were then integrated into a working framework and returned to the data to code it according to the headings of the assignment. Subsequent analysis and comparison across subjects resulted in a consolidation and integration of the framework around a range of categories. By virtue of the assignment, teacher candidates were invited to explore the connection between their life experiences, teaching and

learning. Furthermore, the self-reflective component provided a forum in which to examine their own power and privilege as educators in an inner city school. Through the lens of critical pedagogy with its focus on transformative and libratory frameworks, personal history should allow teachers to engage in generative self-reflection, constructivist perceptions, and to move on a continuum towards awareness and acceptance of 'similarities within difference' (Kanpol, 1991). In keeping with Ball's (2009) vision of creating 'communities of change' (p.20), the following categories were included in the personal histories and framed the observations and practices of the teacher candidates: cultural knowledge, self-knowledge, habits of mind, and reflective communities of practice of the preservice teachers.

Data Sources

Within the framework of a methodology course, six preservice teachers spent three hours a week for three months observing and teaching in an urban school. At the end of the semester, students wrote a reflective personal history assignment that focused on the following categories: cultural knowledge, self-knowledge, habits of mind, and reflective communities of practice. In order to examine the impact of the above categories on their practice, preservice students responded to each category and discussed their commitment and the challenges faced in an urban context. The content of this inquiry served as a focal point for exploration on how belief systems, school contexts, and power structures influence identity, teaching and learning. This inquiry served as an opportunity for the preservice teachers to connect education theory rooted in critical pedagogy to their personal, scholastic, professional and academic trajectory. The ensuing discussion is based on a representative sampling of student responses to each of the categories of

the assignment: cultural knowledge, self-knowledge, habits of mind, and reflective communities of practice.

Prior to the school observations, students self-reported their own demographic details relating to race, gender and socio-economic class. All six participants identified as middle class white caucasians. Only one of the six participants was a male.

Table 1.

Participant Demographics

Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Self-Description of Cultural heritage	Economic Class
Student A	*F*	*European*	*Middle*
Student B	*M*	*European*	*Middle*
Student C	*F*	*European*	*Middle*
Student D	*F*	*European*	*Middle*
Student E	*F*	*European*	*Middle*
Student F	*F*	*European*	*Middle*

Social and Economic Context of the School

Prior to the school observations, teacher candidates were made aware of the the social and economic context of the school. Middle Lake School (MLS) is the pseudonym used to refer to an urban public school that serves over 600 students from kindergarten to grade 7. Situated in a 100 year old crumbling red brick building, it is located in an urban center in a low to mid socio-economic neighbourhood situated beside a busy highway, several major thoroughfares and an active industrial park. On the other side of one of the main thoroughfares there is a residential neighbourhood with single-family homes, townhomes, apartment buildings, a community centre and a large public regional park. The school population is the most diverse in the district with 40% of the student population being Aboriginal as well as a high percentage of Indo-Canadian students. MLS hosts three special programs for the school district, English as a second language

(ESL), French as a second language (FSL) and an Aboriginal Program that includes an Aboriginal support worker and an Aboriginal Cultural Club. Additional programs consist of a breakfast and lunch club for students. The school also provides street and bus safety programs for all kindergarten students. The students at MLS are caught in the vortex of minimally educated parents ensconced in minimum wage occupations juxtaposed with a district and teacher inability to provide blue collar students with equal opportunity (knowledge, skills, values, attitudes) for mobility of their pre-determined socio-economic class (Personal communication with MLS Principal, 2011). Teacher candidates based their reflections on knowledge gained from the discussion relating to the socio-economic context of the school in which the integrated method course took place.

Categories Framing Personal History

Category 1: Cultural Knowledge

As stated in the responses to the personal history assignment, preservice teachers were aware of the cultural differences present in their classrooms. "I was better able to understand the realities of the Aboriginal students and their needs. This is my first time working with this group" (Student F). They were also aware of the existing poverty in classrooms: "...there was one student who never had food so my teacher provided him with food" (Student C). However, one student dismissed the socio-cultural disparities between Aboriginal students and their classmates. "In spite of the many stats (*sic)* regarding Aboriginal student learning, they were/seemed to be normal students" (Student A). Often generalized statements devoid of any reflection were made regarding diversity, "I learned that all schools should be about providing for all students with opportunity regardless of their background (Student D). In keeping with evidence surrounding

the lack of teacher preparation in the area of teaching diversity, responses demonstrated an ability to recognize the normative approaches to teaching and learning but not necessarily the possibility of transforming educational discourses by validating the existing diversity in the classroom (Egbo, 2005; 2009).

Category 2: Self-Knowledge

Despite the onus on critical self-reflection, this assignment did not facilitate the progression towards constructing authentic and empowering knowledge bases. For example, in reference to the European background of all participants, responses made no mention of interrogating biases and privileges afforded by the predominantly white, middle class upbringing of student teachers in relationship to their students. Due to the absence of criticality, the articulation of assumptions and stereotypes was not present in their written reflections. In fact, references to self-knowledge were made in broad, generalized statements. "My identity and beliefs have been reinforced and broadened. I have learnt to make fewer assumptions" (Student A); "I can’t think of any assumptions specifically" (Student B) and "I was better able to understand the realities of aboriginal students and their needs. This is my first time working with this culture group. It helped me self-identify which allowed me to better understand myself as a person and as a teacher" (Student F).

This lack of articulation reflects back to the normative narratives of identity in which white students are not encouraged to reflect upon race in educational contexts. Brown (2005) refers to this as "the myth of racelessness". Brown challenges the notion that curriculum and practice are "unfettered by societal relations of racial and class inequity and are unrelated to identity formation processes" (p.2). In this case, due the lack of professional training pertaining

to the social relations of race and class, the pre-service educators were able to identify but not clearly articulate the challenges experienced in a diverse urban school. Like Brown (2005), Nieto and McDonough (2011) emphasize the importance of developing curriculum and pedagogy that focus on moving pre-service teachers towards critical habits of mind in order to help them confront the complexities of identity, racism and other inequalities. In fact, in previous publications, Nieto (2000; 2004) strongly promote equity as a primordial element of Teacher Education.

Category 4: Habits of Mind

Grant and Gibson (2011) state that the vision of teacher education is to cultivate habits of mind that allow teachers to 'assimilate cultural knowledge, knowledge of social context, content knowledge, and pedagogical tools into analysis and improvement of practice' (p. 31). Samaras, Hicks & Garvey Berger (2007) state that the formative contextualized experiences of our lives that influence how we think about and practice teaching provides a formidable mechanism for teachers to reflect upon how their personal histories impact on their ability to teach and learn. However, student responses relating to habits of mind focused on technocratic, rational elements of schooling: "I became aware of having a good rapport with kids" (Student A); "I still thought that schools were teacher-centered but I am happy to see in many cases that it is not" (Student D); "I realize how important the tone and structure of the classroom is to learning" (Student E); "I see the problems of our education system in a different light and how it effects our students. I'm not sure how, but I would like to offer support to my students that will create a better experience for them in order to help them grow as people" (Student F).

Critical literature has demonstrated that teachers' practice can alternately reinforce race, class and gender inequities or validate these multiple realities (Ball and Tyson, 2011). Since practice is based on knowledge constructs derived from university settings, it is important to move away from mainstream ideological perceptions of race, class and gender which support social inequity. The pervasiveness of dominant ideology in teacher education programs reflect a deficit-model, marginalized approach to race, gender and socio-economic class. Since academic readings and professional orientations in Teacher Education in racially homogenous contexts tend to focus on mainstream perspectives, students' initial reflections on the study of their own lives and its impact on practice are not challenged. As select members of the dominant discourse, they do not comprehend the issues facing those other, hidden voices in their classrooms. However, the importance of critical reflection and narrative cannot be underestimated. As one student describes "when instructors share their challenges during their early careers I think this encourages student teachers to be more honest about challenges" (Student C). Gay (2003), Heilman (2003) and hooks (1994) concur that stories are fundamental for understanding the diverse pedagogical conceptions and perspectives of teaching and learning in the twenty-first century. Furthermore, sharing these stories is tantamount to maintaining awareness of socio-cultural and economic class differences. This modelling of narrative inquiry by peers and professors allows the progression towards transformative and enriching pedagogy which is inclusive of all.

Category 5: Reflective Communities of Practice

"People are constantly complaining about all the reflection we have to do but I believe in them. It is important to realize and to consider what you have if you want to move forward,

improve yourself" (Student F). Despite this one positive comment, reflective communities of practice proved to be a difficult endeavour for most preservice teachers. For the most part, students did not comprehend the overwhelming directive to reflect. "I find it terribly difficult to reflect. Discussion groups...serve me well. "(Student A). "Self-reflection did not help me as much as I expected. What really helped me were the discussions and the debriefs – to hear about others' experiences helped me realize what I had experienced" (Student B). Responses revealed that is was, more so, the sharing of instructor led reflections that were beneficial. Brown (2005) notes that preservice teachers are more likely to identify racial identity and privilege into their self-constructions if it is structured around a group identity theme. Essentially, reflection for the sake of reflection and a generalized out of context approach to critical pedagogy, does not promote disruptions, interrogations of mainstream practices. Without firm parameters in place, criticality becomes dislodged and discombobulated and lost in the miasma of technocratic, rational practice and praxis. Therefore, what may be conceptualized as an oversight or lack of acknowledgement of differences related to race and class is possibly a reflection of an unconscious worldview, a perspective that does not require white students to think about poverty and diversity in urban educational contexts. Since difference is reserved for the *other*, aboriginal and minority students, the preservice teachers, coming from mainstream contexts, are often challenged or unable to think critically about their own race and class in relation to diverse, urban contexts.

Discussion

The following analysis will discuss the emergent themes identified in the assignment. Through direct observation, teacher candidates recognized the socio-cultural diversity existing in

the urban public school. Even though they acknowledged socio-cultural differences in their students, reflections stemming from the personal history assignment demonstrated that they required foundational knowledge in the area of critical pedagogy focusing on the social relations of race and class in order to respond to the needs of the urban school population. "I'm not sure how, but I would like to offer support to my students that will create a better experience" (Student F). For many students, this exposure to the urban context underscored their lack of training regarding specific urban related socio-economic educational issues like poverty and socio-cultural issues relating to the disparity between their own racial background and their students' racial background "Although MLS was more inner-city than my own school, I did not really pay attention to issues that students may face" (Student E).

The gap between students of color and Eurocentric practices of mainstream schooling has prompted many scholars to argue for more representative and empowering ways of teaching in urban schools (Parhar & Sensoy, 2011). Often referred to as culturally relevant pedagogy (Shariff, 2008), this approach emphasizes learning encounters that are more relevant (Gay, 2003), using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, habits (Ladson-Billings, 2006) and cultural content such as experiences, values, events, knowledge, perspectives and issues that arise from the student's community (Pang & Park, 2011). Even though the teacher candidates were aware of the lack of opportunities available to those other, hidden voices which populate the urban classrooms(poor students from lower socio-economic backgrounds and marginalized aboriginal students), they could not at this point in their personal history and professional training identify the privilege of race and class present in their own backgrounds. This lack of awareness impeded the conceptualization of a transformative pedagogy which would have been inclusive of these observed differences.

This noted racial incongruency between preservice teachers and their students' has been recognized elsewhere and further emphasizes the importance of introducing critical pedagogy and critical multiculturalism at an early stage in teacher education programs (Delpit, 2006; Nieto, 2004; Villegas and Lewis, 2002; Shariff, 2008). Delpit (2006) argues that teachers can positively transform the lives of minority children if they acknowledge their own prejudices, stereotypes and cultural assumptions, often the result of misunderstandings when primarily White educators teach in diverse contexts. Since schooling is a culturally and ideologically mediated experience, teacher education programs have the responsibility of introducing the neglected discourses of the underrepresented voices into constructs relating to curriculum, practice and assessment. It is of note that the Teacher Education program that the preservice teachers were enrolled in broached critical pedagogy in the curriculum and instruction course offered on site in an urban school. However, there were no sustainable parameters upon which future educators could reflect upon power and privilege.

Conclusion

Due to the limitations of size, scope, and findings, this study does not attempt to make generalized statements regarding critical pedagogy and personal history. Rather, the intent is to initiate a discussion focusing on beliefs and practices of preservice teachers in an urban school. Specifically in this context, personal history coupled with critical pedagogy did not serve as a platform upon which future teachers were able to develop critical and culturally relevant practices of teaching and learning. Despite the juxtaposition afforded by critical pedagogy and reflective and autobiographical narratives, teacher candidates found it difficult and challenging to counteract the normative experiences of their own schooling. This recognition demonstrated the

importance of creating conditions where preservice teachers can learn to explore their personal history and experiences in order to fully comprehend the complexities of education and the many dimensions of diversity, including poverty (Samara, Hicks & Garvey Berger, 2007).

The recorded obliviousness to difference coupled with the lack of knowledge and preparation of these teacher candidates concerning diversity point to the monumental importance of reconceptualising teacher education programs in North America. Considering the rapidly growing number of aboriginal students and children of color as well as the low numbers of minority teachers and administrators in public schools, this is a tenet well worth discussing in both policy and practice spheres. In keeping with this problematization present in teacher education programs, Barrón (2008) speaks to the cognitive dissonance apparent in preservice teachers' discourses when discussing race, power and privilege. She has observed the niggling discomfort of students grasping with notions of their own cultural identity in relationship to marginalization and otherness. This destabilizing of beliefs and the disruption of uncontested privilege encourages an examination of traditional ideological conceptions of student learning and behaviour.

Due to the racial and ethnic incongruency between teachers and their urban students, teacher education is increasingly drawing on Whiteness studies as an approach for pre-service teachers to deepen an examination of power and privilege. Of interest is the gamut of literature which demonstrates that many white teachers enter pre-service programs with negative perceptions of poor students and students of color. Sleeter (2000) notes that many white teachers avoid discussing issues of race, minimize the extent and impact of racial discrimination, and refuse to discuss race openly. The collected data detailing the personal history of the six teacher candidates teaching and learning in an urban school, while not representative of negative

stereotypes and assumptions did, in fact, minimize difference and emphasize, as Brown (2005) states, the *myth of racelessness*.

Since teaching is not a neutral act but the culmination of personal history and professional experiences, educators should be required to critique all aspects of their work including their race and their socio-economic background. This type of critical consciousness involves interrogating the multiple, complex identities of the self while interrupting mainstream ideological discourses which reinforce the reproduction of normative curricular and assessment practices. Educators who demonstrate critical consciousness can then begin to question their own positions, assumptions and beliefs about themselves and others. Nieto (2000) recommends that pre-service teachers should be given opportunities to reflect on identity and privilege. Since beliefs, traditions and values impact teaching, explorations of one's culture and race become integral components of practice.

Transformative Praxis

Bartolomé (2004; 2008), a university educator, provides a model for the implementation of critical consciousness of pre-service teachers. She employs critical pedagogy in her work to help teacher candidates develop ideological clarity. She concludes that teacher education must include implicit study of ideology in coursework, field placement and service-learning opportunities. Accordingly, she believes that naming ideology is not enough. Pre-service teachers cannot be expected to independently and effectively work with or through experiences designed to unsettle their assumptions. Consequently, scaffolding through conceptual frameworks that can help pre-service teachers investigate racism or classicism, specific guidelines for carrying out inquiry, teacher modelling of shared narrative experiences, and

providing models and support for practice in critical reflection is a necessary step toward developing critical consciousness. In the case of this limited study, the lack of critical reflection in the personal history assignment was problematic. This impeded the understanding of social critique and diversity in educational contexts. Developing critical consciousness in a methodic and calculated manner in these programs is necessary to counter hegemonic, traditional stances in education.

In keeping with Bartolmé (2004; 2008) and Brown's (2005) focus on developing criticality in a progressive scaffolding, personal history self-study and self-knowledge become important pieces in transforming pedagogy and practice. Researchers acknowledge that when critical reflection is missing from teacher education programs, teacher candidates adopt a technocratic rational approach in the classroom unaware of the impact of the pedagogical and moral consequences of their actions. By providing solid parameters for reconstructing significant life events and analyzing these circumstances on an on-going basis, pre-service teachers should be able to embark on the path of developing professional identity and integrity by exploring pathways between knowledge and practice particularly in compromised educational contexts commonly found in low-income, culturally diverse urban schools.

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A Delicate and Strong Sticky Cobweb: The Complex Interconnectedness of Teacher Identity and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy

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Abstract

This chapter examines a shocking and reflective teacher candidate narrative involved in an innovative equity-based Canadian teacher education initiative. This equity-based initiative promotes a teaching pedagogy embedded in culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy in the hopes of creating a dialogue between teacher candidates and their associate teachers. From an interview with a teacher candidate about her involvement in this initiative and its influence on her practicum experiences, three excerpts are examined and explored in relation to literature on deficit thinking and white privilege. The critical analysis of these excerpts draws attention to the complex and multi-dimensional roots of inequities created, sustained and perpetuated in schools and their relationship to the identity of educators. The findings demonstrate the importance of critical reflection and dialogue amongst educators in order to begin to recognize their own biases that are often deeply seated in the effects of colonialism that perpetuate and sustain deficit practices.

Introduction and Background

This chapter emerges from a larger critical practitioner research study that explores an initial teacher education equity initiative, the Diverse Schools (DS) Initiative[1] which promotes culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy (CRRP) (Sharma, 2013). The theoretical framework of the DS Initiative and the larger study was based on the original literature of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) (Gay, 2002), culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) (Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995), and several secondary works, which used them (Howard, 2003; Young, 2010; Brown, 2007; Kress, 2005).

The larger critical practitioner research study questions the way in which culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching are seen as compatible and applicable to the Canadian context within which the DS Initiative operates [2] . Moreover, the study was conducted over eight months and involved ten teacher candidates, eight associate teachers, two administrators, and the two developers of the Diverse Schools initiative; as the research participants. Research was collected through field observation notes in twelve classes, six seminars, two joint seminars, and twenty-two semi-structured interviews. I wrote critical reflections after each class, seminar, and interview. The conceptual framework that informed the critical analysis of the data was critical pedagogy and anti-neoliberalism. Specifically, the methods used for the analysis were constant comparison, thematic clustering, and member checking to ensure catalytic validity (Lather, 1986). To understand the context of the DS Initiative it is important to provide some details about its formation and purpose.

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[1] Diverse Schools Initiative is a pseudonym being used to protect the identity of the Initiative. It is important to note that all names of programs, options, and participants are also pseudonyms to protect their identities.

[2] Further explanation of why CRT and CRP are not compatible or applicable to the Canadian school context is provided above.

The DS Initiative was carried out in a Canadian initial teacher education program and it promoted CRRP[3] in the hopes of creating a space for dialogue between teacher candidates and their associate teacher. The DS Initiative had three parts to it; (1) in a school and society class taught by Ryan and Lina (this was a mandatory class for all teacher candidates to attend), (2) in afternoon seminars for invited associate teachers, and (3) in joint afternoon seminars in which the invited associate teachers and their respective teacher candidates would attend. Thus the DS Initiative was a summation of all three settings, which then set the stage for the practicum. Ryan and Lina had hoped the associate teacher and teacher candidate would incorporate and talk about CRRP in their teaching. The larger study explored and analyzed the teacher candidates, associate teacher, and administrators' narratives shared during semi-structured interviews and in recorded field notes about the DS Initiative.

For the purpose of this chapter, an in depth examination and critical analysis of one particular disruptive experience that Kathleen (a teacher candidate who participated in the Diverse Schools Initiative) shared with me during her interview will be shared. Kathleen self-identifies as a White middle class woman who sometimes struggled to negotiate and navigate different parts of her identity when teaching diverse student populations. In one of Kathleen's practicum placements a kindergarten student confronted her about her power and privilege. She shared this particular case with me because it upset her and challenged her to think how deeply troublesome power and privilege is when it is not acknowledged. What emerged as significant from this challenging experience were the layered dimensions of teacher identity and how in classrooms, certain identity traits of teachers are privileged and others are suppressed.

[3] Ryan and Lina, the developers of the DS Initiative claimed because the two original theories (CRP) and (CRT) were compatible they combined the two to be known as CRRP.

Kathleen's Challenging Practicum Experience

Kathleen is a teacher candidate from the Equity Option of a Faculty of Education at a large Canadian university who experienced what she calls "a crisis" that stayed with her after her practicum placement ended. Kathleen expressed that her kindergarten students' behaviours impacted her experience of the flow of each day during her practicum and that all the emotions she felt during the day went home with her every night. She was self-reflecting every night and exhausted by the magnitude of impact teaching has on students. In the following excerpt, Kathleen describes her interaction with one particular student she found most challenging to work with:

> …the student with the most extreme behaviour only came during the morning...so, I tried to create a situation in which they could succeed. The kids were expected to come in and put their coats away and have a seat on their section of the carpet. Progressively, this routine for that particular child became challenging; there was nowhere to put him on the carpet without putting other kids at risk. So we started putting him at the back of the classroom. The challenge of balancing other students' safety and learning with the student's right to be in the class was very difficult. I really valued the transparency of my associate teacher about this particular student's situation (Kathleen interview, 2011, p.4).

It is clear that Kathleen had reflected on this challenging situation in which she did not wish to use deficit-based practices such as strategic seating placements to "correct" or address the inappropriate behaviour of the student. Kathleen's checking in with her associate teacher demonstrates her desire to address the situation collaboratively without using deficit thinking and labeling the child due to his violent tendencies. Significantly, later in the interview, Kathleen disclosed that this boy was a young Black boy, and that this made her very mindful of falling

into deficit thinking about marginalized and racialized students, as well as conscious of her own racial identity which she identified as White and middle-class.

When she sought advice from other staff members at the school on the matter, Kathleen was told that she had to be more firm with the child, however she felt that she was "being as firm as [she] could be without picking up the child or yelling" (Kathleen interview, 2011, p.5). She wanted the child to understand that she was there with no intent to punish him, but rather to teach him, and she wished he could trust her. Unfortunately, one day, the child got upset and physically attacked Kathleen. As a result, the child was brought by the racially marginalized associate teacher to Kathleen to apologize. However, when he was given this opportunity to apologize, the child chose not to apologize and responded negatively instead. Kathleen vividly described this confrontation as:

> At one point the student had physically attacked me and he was brought by my associate teacher to me to apologize. She reminded him that I was an adult and I needed to be respected. But the student responded and said, "Yeah, but she is not really the same." And then my associate teacher said "Just because she is a student teacher … she is still an adult." Then he said, "No that is not what I mean, it is because she is white" (Kathleen interview, 2011, p. 5).

The kindergarten student's comments deeply affected Kathleen as she realized the impact of race and power that the child was struggling with. The student was very young, had no authority in the situation, and came from a racially marginalized background. He recognized the person to whom he was being asked to apologize as "White". Once again, in response, Kathleen's associate teacher urged her to be firm with him, but at the same time, to respect the child while talking to him. This turning point incident left Kathleen with questions, frustrations, and

complete unease because there seemed to be no one that would help her or no resource book to guide her.

Later on in her interview with me, Kathleen disclosed a third narrative about how other racially marginalized female kindergarten students acknowledged her White privilege. These students remarked that they wanted her to be their mother as she had white skin and they wanted to be White. Again, for Kathleen, dealing with race on this level was very disheartening:

> One girl told me that she wished that she was White, she was fascinated with my hair and eye/skin colour. Then another student asked me what was underneath my skin. This was an interesting teaching moment. I told them that underneath my skin we look the same. There were great moments and there were moments that broke my heart, in which students would ask me to be their mom because they wanted a white mom. This was a very reflective opportunity, but also very hard to deal with (Kathleen interview, 2011, p. 6).

This passage of the interview highlights Kathleen's becoming aware of how her marginalized kindergarten students recognize whiteness as privileged and desirable. As an aside, I wonder if the kindergarten female students had a certain reason in mind for why they wanted her as their mom and why the young boy in the previous passage refused to apologize to her because she was White. Moreover, I wonder if the female students internalized White skin to being more desirable because they have already internalized their identity as subordinate. The process in which these students have decoded and constructed racial differences is unclear but intriguing to note as they are still developing verbal and written skills in kindergarten. Are racial privileges to be understood as unspoken "common sense" assumptions that are ever present in our daily narratives? Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that throughout the three interview

excerpts that Kathleen shared, she genuinely hoped to struggle and unpack race, racial categories and race relations in the classroom setting.

All three of these interview excerpts with Kathleen are rich in sensitive and controversial issues that can arise in the context of inner city school teaching with respect to deficit thinking, race relations, and power and privilege in a classroom, and make visible the complexity inherent in doing equity work. However, prior to a deep analysis of each of these interview excerpts, I will delineate the theoretical and conceptual frameworks used to guide the analysis that follows. The next section will briefly explain both the theoretical and conceptual framework used in this chapter.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

As mentioned previously, the theoretical framework is grounded in the literature on culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching. Ladson-Billings (1994, 1995a, 1995b) and Gay (2002) are understood to be the first scholars to coin the terms "culturally relevant pedagogy" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995a, 1995b) and "culturally responsive pedagogy" (Gay, 2002).

Ladson-Billings defined the term "culturally relevant pedagogy" as a pedagogy that "not only addressed student achievement but also helped students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate" (1995a, p. 469). This definition has been reiterated as the three central tenets of culturally relevant pedagogy namely: (1) high expectations for all students, (2) cultural competence, and (3) political consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). Moreover, Ladson-

Billings (1994, 1995b) encouraged teachers to recognize the internalization of deficit thinking that is prominent in the lives of many marginalized students.

Gay (2002) explained culturally responsive teaching as having five essential components. These are:

(1) developing a knowledge base about cultural diversity;

(2) including ethnic and cultural diversity content in the curriculum;

(3) demonstrating caring and building learning communities;

(4) communicating effectively with ethnically diverse students; and

(5) responding to ethnic diversity in the delivery of instruction (p. 106).

In other words, Gay's (2002) understanding of culturally responsive teaching focused on the teaching practices that occur within the classroom context and focuses on building an inclusive community amongst students.

In addition to these two central scholars' work, several secondary literature pieces (Bazron, Osher, & Fleischman, 2005; Bergeron, 2008; Bondy, Ross, Gallingane, & Hambacher, 2007; Brown, 2007; Brown-Jeffy and Cooper, 2011; Chamberlain, 2005; Hefflin, 2002; Howard, 2003; Kress, 2005; Montgomery, 2001; Morrison, Robbins & Rose, 2008; Osborne, 1996; ; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; and Young, 2010) on culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching have been written that emerged out of their original work.

While reading and reflecting upon these secondary articles, I observed that the terms culturally responsive and culturally relevant pedagogy were used interchangeably by many of the authors. Indeed, very often when scholars argued a perspective on making teaching more relevant to the students' lives, they would quote both Ladson-Billings and Gay to support their claims. Thus, for many scholars it seems that both culturally responsive teaching and culturally

relevant pedagogy have the same prospective goals and audiences, and as a result, can be used interchangeably and in union.

I believe that both culturally relevant and culturally responsive pedagogies are well-intentioned and share the common goal of creating more positive and equitable schooling experiences for all students. However, I do not believe that the terms are interchangeable as presented in the current literature. Upon closer examination of Ladson-Billings' work (1994, 1995a, 1995b) and Gay's work (2002) it is clear that the content and the political consciousness behind them differed greatly. In general, Ladson-Billings' (1995) work is far more critical and recognizes the larger political agenda in which schooling is submerged, unlike the practical approaches for good classroom teaching that Gay (2002) offers. It is with these distinctions in mind that I question whether these two pedagogies are compatible. Moreover, I challenge the notion of diversity (Black, Hispanic and White) that is understood in the United States (from which both Ladson-Billings and Gay write from) in contrast to a Canadian (in particular Toronto) notion of diversity (going well beyond Black, Hispanic, and White into all different nationalities). Recognizing that diversity in both these physical locations is very different, I am question if CRRP is applicable to the Toronto context.

As for the political consciousness behind CRT and CRP it is different as well. Gay's CRT approach is rooted in a liberalism that celebrates multi-culturalism, this is apparent in the key components of CRT. In contrast Ladson-Billings' CRP politically begins to acknowledge race and culture, as the second key component in CRP is cultural competence. However, I support an anti-neoliberal and critical approach to education that challenges the construction of race and cultural categories. Multiculturalism does not challenging the status quo or deficit attitudes towards racially marginalized students rather it serves as is a cloak for neoliberalism.

Multiculturalism, as an educational philosophy, has begun to move to a more strategic form of utilizing culture for economic purposes, and away from a sense of individual fulfillment and of the necessity of forming bonds of social and national cohesion (Mitchell, 2003, p. 399).

In other words, using the cultural identity of students in the classroom in this way does not support or empower marginalized students but rather misuses their cultural identity for political economic gain. Mitchell (2003) explains that economic gain is made if students in Canadian schools see themselves as citizens of the Canadian mosaic, thus creating global connections and become invitations for economic gain. Thus, a multicultural approach to education does not empower marginalized populations or challenge inequitable social class barriers. A critical approach requires educators to break down inscribed identities that help reinforce and maintain the status quo. The gapping gap of the lack of power and privilege ascribed to racially marginalized bodies is inequitable and should not be ignored or redirected but challenged and confronted head on. Students need to be heard and their dignity needs to upheld (not just celebrated and acknowledged) in order for them to have genuine accessibility to mobilize their economic status we need to change the way we think and act towards them.

Although being weary and conscious of the anti-neoliberal and critical lens that is missing in the DS Initiative, it is important to recognize that the DS Initiative attempts to begin a dialogue that has been nonexistent in the past. Eventually it is with a series of beginning steps such as the DS Initiative can the possibilities of discussing and enacting the process of changing political consciousness emerge.

Furthermore, the conceptual framework of critical pedagogy and anti-neoliberalism serves as a lens through which Kathleen's interview excerpts were analysed. My vision of critical pedagogy, which is heavily influenced by Freire (1970), demonstrates an interdependent

and co-existing relationship between theory and practice while attesting to the omnipresence of neoliberal values and power dynamics that maintain the status quo. In particular, Freire's (1970) notion of praxis, through critical pedagogy, claims that democratic education offers guidance and the necessary "tools" required to begin understanding and dealing with these bigger ethical problems. Burbules and Berk's (1999) interpretation of Freire's (1970) notion of critical pedagogy clearly explains what role praxis takes in helping formulate true democratic education possibilities:

> The task of critical pedagogy is to bring members of an oppressed group to a critical consciousness of their situation as a beginning point of their liberatory praxis. Change in consciousness [(i.e. thought)] and concrete action [(i.e. practice)] are linked for Freire; the greatest single barrier against the prospect of liberation is an ingrained, fatalistic belief in the inevitability and necessity of an unjust status quo (Burbules & Berk, 1999, p.51).

Thus, I believe that it is only with democratic education that students and educators will be able to understand the serious and damaging unethical nature of neoliberal schooling practices. Proponents of democratic education are cognizant of neoliberal value/thought-laden school practices (e.g. drilling, standardized testing, labeling, student disengagement). Consequently, they contend that critical pedagogy must provide students with the necessary tools required to transform inequitable, undemocratic, or oppressive institutions and social relations (Burbules and Berk, 1999). They examine the neoliberal framework by questioning the criteria used to create the school curriculum, the criteria used to create/assess/evaluate standardized tests, the assimilation process of school culture (which is reflective of the dominant Euro-centric middle/upper class values). Thus, it is with these understandings of critical pedagogy and anti-neoliberal lens that I examine and interpret Kathleen's excerpts.

Analysis of Kathleen's Narrative

Reflection.

Kathleen (2010) struggled with uncomfortable moments and tensions due to the direct and indirect interactions she had with students and their comments on her race, power, and privilege. The comments made by her students made Kathleen deeply conscious of what privileges she embodied while still being in the process of becoming a teacher, and this brought her to an emotional crisis. Kathleen's narrative reminds us that the process of becoming a teacher is not a linear, lock-step process (i.e. learning about CRRP, applying CRRP when working diverse students and thus all conflicts are cleared); rather, it occurs more like multiple diverse water waves (i.e. disruptive and uncomfortable experiences as exemplified in the excerpts) which come at different speeds and strengths which then become the part of the ongoing process of becoming a teacher.

As a practitioner researcher who is also an educator, I went through this ongoing process of "becoming a teacher" and now teach at the university and public school level. I recognize the *delicate, strong, and sticky complexities* that identity creates when entering into the teaching profession. Kathleen's dilemmas about not reinforcing deficit race-based assumptions while still trying to maintain the safety of other students are understandable. In the second excerpt, I recognize the stark race relation interaction, I can relate to it however only in reverse roles; as a racially marginalized woman I have faced the dilemmas of having to assert my position and identity in front of White middle class students and colleagues all the time. With respect to the last excerpt, where Kathleen is met with a mirror image of White privilege that is valued and revered, I cannot say that I have experienced this as an educator. However, I have experienced what it means not to be respected or to be spoken down to by several White students' parents and

colleagues in the profession. As I transcribed Kathleen's excerpts, my belief that teaching is a profession that requires and demands a high level of emotional investment was reaffirmed. I believe that a teacher who is committed to his or her students recognizes and upholds him or herself as accountable to the dignity and equitable education that all students deserve on a daily basis. Teachers who share this mindset push the boundaries of teaching as a technical occupation and bring it to a level of professionalism and humanism that it demands.

Excerpt #1 in depth: Deficit thinking and implications.

Based on my master's dissertation there are three different frameworks that create, sustain, and often 'justify' deficit thinking (Sharma, 2009). The three frameworks are: pseudo-scientific, sociological/cultural, and socio-economic. Often, however, researchers who argue from the standpoint of one of these frameworks extend and overlap into the other frameworks. Nevertheless, for the purposes of analyzing excerpt #1, I examine the second framework as it relates closely to the controversial concern Kathleen has about reaffirming a deficit stereotype based on the sociological identity of the kindergarten as a young black male student.

The sociological/cultural framework is one that creates, sustains and often "justifies" deficit thinking. Valenzuela (1999), Garza and Crawford (2005), and Cooper (2006) argue that deficit thinking also has its roots in sociological/cultural differences. They contend that the treatment shown by some educators towards inner city students is presumptuous and often disrespectful. This presumptuous treatment is most visible in the interactions between the teacher and the students (Valenzuela, 1999). Differing curricular, pedagogical and student evaluation practices emphasize different cognitive and behavioural skills in each social setting. Such practices contribute to the development of social identity in "behavioural", "inner city",

"immigrant", and "special needs" children with respect to physical and symbolic capital, to authority, and to the process of work which in turn make up their social class identity (Anyon, 1980).

With this sociological/cultural conceptualization in mind and returning to Kathleen's first excerpt, what does putting a young Black male kindergarten student at the back of the classroom symbolize? It can be argued that there are implicit biases against young Black males in public schools as their identities have been socially inscribed by a neoliberal society that sustains a division in its citizens to maintain and sustain its political and economic agenda. Clearly, that agenda does not support or serve the racially marginalized bodies who are mostly deemed to be fit as representatives of the working/labor force and thus do not need a high level of education (Anyon, 1980).

While I recognize that Kathleen had good intentions in checking in with her associate teacher on possible strategies for addressing the behaviour of that particular student while protecting the safety of other students, I would suggest that a further interrogation into why that child behaved in that manner is necessary. Having a discussion with that child, and/or the child's parents and examining their life history might offer some insight into how to interact with him before choosing to place him at the back of the classroom. What is troublesome is how these actions would be internalized and understood by the young Black male kindergarten student when he reflects in the future about his schooling experiences.

The quick and challenging decisions that teacher candidates must make in the classroom also provide insight into their (un)conscious implicit and socialized biases and the lasting effects and significance they can have for the racially marginalized student. Valenzuela (1999) states that the major effect of deficit thinking, which targets the sociological/cultural backgrounds of

racially marginalized children, is a sense of alienation. He notes that instead of seeing racially marginalized students as capable of using agency, critical thinking[4], and being resistant to the school's lack of connectedness to them, many school officials label them as disengaged individuals who act out against school rules. In other words, these racially marginalized children are labeled as disrespectful, disengaged, unappreciative, and rebellious because they do not adhere to the dominant neoliberal norms that construct school culture.

Garza and Crawford (2005) also suggest that a binary contrast is drawn between dominant norms and racially marginalized lived experiences, which are seen as abnormal due to deficit thinking: "The cultural capital of the dominant group and their related manners of interacting and producing knowledge are the basis from which 'normality' is constructed within the broader society and upon which value is assigned" (p.602). As a result of this contrast drawn between racially marginalized students and school culture a "…clash between students and school over the definition of caring and education [is created and] inevitably leads to disaffection and alienation on both sides" (Smith as cited in Valenzuela, 1999, p. 246). In Kathleen's case, it is apparent that discomfort and dissatisfaction encumbers upon not only the student but the well-intentioned educator, and it is in these moments of tension that the ongoing process of becoming a teacher becomes apparent as one of complexity and challenge.

[4] Critically thinking in this context means, marginalized students have the capacity to think as individuals and engage in meaningful conversation around ideas and concepts that go beyond any given curriculum subject matter. In other words, they are capable of much more than rote and repetitious learning as they are thinking human beings.

Excerpt #2 and 3 in depth: A discussion about acknowledging white power and privilege and implications.

In the second and third excerpt of my interview with Kathleen, it is interesting to note that kindergarten students recognize and vocalize the impact of White power and privilege, both directly and indirectly. Yet, ironically, Fine (2005) argues

> Where Whiteness grows as a seemingly "natural" signifier for quality, merit, and advantage, the Asian American runs a close second—always never quite achieving Whiteness—dressed in "model minority" wear; the African American and Latino identities, as signifiers, disintegrate to embody deficit or "lack"…In schools, "Whiteness" and "colour" are therefore not merely created in parallel but are fundamentally relational in (in)equity." (p. 246)

The fact that kindergarten students are able to demonstrate their resilience by not apologizing to a person who exemplifies White power and privilege challenges what Fine (2005) claims is a "natural signifier of advantage and merit". However, as schooling continues to support this in(equitable) approach to race relations, "…[w]hiteness, like all 'colours' [i]s being manufactured, in part, through educational arrangements; specifically; within and across institutions designed 'as if' hierarchy, stratification, and scarcity were inevitable, natural, and essential" (Fine, 2005, p. 246). Thus, often the deficit assumptions towards racially marginalized students and the presumed inherent merit and quality attached to White people is internalized by students. However, it is pertinent for students and educators to recognize

> [s]chools as contested spaces, that structure the conditions of the embodiment, performance, and/or interruption of sustained and inequitable racial formations. (Weis & Fine as quoted by Fine, 2005, p. 246)

Hence as educators we must interrogate, interrupt, and interject these contested spaces to create democratic schooling experiences for all students.

It is truly saddening to hear kindergarten students wishing for their skin and their mothers to change because of their racial identity. In the third excerpt, it is apparent that the racially marginalized female kindergarten students idealize and uphold being White as enchanting and powerful. While Kathleen was distressed by the requests made by the students, her well-intentioned reflective response reaffirmed her White privilege and power in that she supports a colour-blind approach to schooling. In particular, Kathleen's third narrative connects with the concept of colour-blind society, as she states "…underneath the skin we all look the same" while simultaneously her narrative above brings to surface these hidden dimensions of White power and privilege in the classroom (Kathleen interview, 2011, p.6). A critical race theorist, Rosenberg (2004) addresses this irony:

> [t]hose who favor a colour-blind society fail to see that race, especially skin color, has consequences for a person's status and well-being. That blindness to skin color and race remains a "privilege" available exclusively to White people highlights the reality that color blindness only serves to perpetuate and institutionalize the very divisions between people that it seeks to overcome. (p.257)

Thus, it is important to note that unlike Kathleen, racially marginalized students do not have a choice but to see race and skin colour, as their socially inscribed identities are only formulated in comparison to the privileged White identity that "inherently" becomes idealized. As a result, I urge all stakeholders in education and teacher educators in particular, to reflect, deconstruct and reconstruct how White power and privilege is sustained and maintained in schooling practices.

I recognize that many racially marginalized students have difficulty asserting that they will not blend in with the socially-inscribed identity pre-assigned to them, in particular challenge how mainstream thinking constructs and restricts their identity to a deficit based race, culture, or socio-economic status. I believe that there is a multitude of reasons why challenging socially-inscribed deficit identities is difficult for racially marginalized students, but there is no reason for why educators do not create the spaces and opportunities to encourage and invite these conversations inside their classrooms and schools. I think it is crucial that educators rise up and create these spaces for transformations to occur in public schools, so that all students can empower themselves and we can assist them in experiencing more equitable and democratic schooling experiences.

Further Directions for Teacher Education

I believe in doing equity work and exploring new initiatives, such as the Diverse Schools Initiative, because these initiatives provide the beginning spaces to have the missing dialogue about the importance and necessity of striving for equitable schooling experiences for all students. Moreover, such equity initiatives have the potential of creating attention that may have a rippling effect on stakeholders in education and thus indirectly affect public schooling practices. However, with the three excerpts from Kathleen's interview in hindsight, I acknowledge that despite well-intentioned teacher candidates and associate teachers who are aware of the value of using culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy, there is a great deal of work that remains to be done. Equity work is complex as the identities of educators are in constant (un)conscious interaction and dialogue with diverse students, teaching values, teaching practices, and every particular context of schooling. To recap, the Kathleen's unconscious

implicit biases that surfaced when deciding to place the young Black boy at the back of the carpet, the disbelief of the resilience the young Black boy demonstrated by refusing to apologize to her as a "White woman" which made her confront her "colourless skin", and finally how Kathleen was confronted by the deeply internalized White identity, she embodies, as being the most desirable by young racially marginalized female students. Each of these excerpts interrupted and interrogated Kathleen's racial identity, which is part of her teacher identity; in a way that could not be ignored during this process in becoming a teacher. It is when these delicate, strong, and sticky threads of complex teacher identity and disruptive moments in the classroom meet that there is an opportunity to collectively create a new vision of equitable public schooling experiences.

I agree with Portelli, Shields, & Vibert's (2007) claim that, "[a] democratic education does not observe the usual polite silences on controversial or 'sensitive' matters; does not shy away from publicly naming and taking up injustices; welcomes disagreement and conflict as critical to a dialectic of justice" (p. 55). I believe this implies that democratic education is an ideal that will be constantly in the "making" through critical dialogue in which everyone (who chooses to be a part of the coalition) participates. "In this sense, democracy itself is never fully achieved; it is an on-going struggle, shaped by the access of all citizens to voice, and the willingness to privilege, to speak out on behalf of a common good[5]" (Portelli, Shields, and Vibert, 2007, p. 56).

[5] I am aware that not all citizens exercise their right to engage in critical dialogue, as many feminist scholars (e.g. hooks, Tannen, Gillian, Noddings) have argued that the way in which they deliver their thoughts is not respected by the "rational" minds of Western world. However, I still encourage all citizens who feel unable to speak, to voice directly these impediments that do not allow them to comfortably participate in critical dialogue.

With respect to the classroom, teaching critical thinking "requires one to seek deeper levels of self-knowledge, and to acknowledge how one's own worldview can shape students' conceptions of self…we teach who we are" (Howard, 2003, p. 198). When educators critically uncover their assumptions that are often rooted in deficit thinking, then we can collectively work on how to eliminate such deficit thinking practices (Portelli, Shields, and Vibert, 2007). I recognize that not all teachers or administrators are willing to "give up their privileges" by acknowledging their biases. "Going against the grain" (i.e. being morally responsible for ones privileges and biases) requires a constant struggle that is demanding and difficult.

However, I believe it is crucial that all teachers be made aware of the serious ethical implications of deficit thinking, so that they may begin thinking about how they can be morally responsible and contribute to equitable schooling practices that reflect, embrace, and challenge neoliberal assumptions about racially marginalized students [6] . "Critical teacher reflection is essential to culturally relevant pedagogy because it can ultimately measure teachers' levels of concern and care for their students" (Howard, 2003, p. 199). Culturally relevant pedagogy is an approach to teaching that is sensitive and aware of different cultural values and ideas, which may not necessarily coincide with the dominant Euro-centric school culture. Such a pedagogy is pertinent if teachers choose to show concern for their students. By engaging in critical teacher reflection and then enacting culturally relevant pedagogy practices, educators will create a more inclusive class/school culture. As a result, when the students feel respected, included, and understood by their educators, they will embrace a higher level of self-esteem and worth than that through which the greater society views them. "[T]he way students are thought about and

[6] I believe these critical dialogues must be done with Noddings conception of an "ethics of care." An ethics of care is one essential component for critical dialogue. In particular, I contend that active listening, mutual respect, openness to dialogue, and genuine compassion for the other are necessary components that must be enacted while pursuing such critical dialogues.

treated by society and consequently by the schools they attend and the educators who teach them is fundamental in creating academic success or failure" (Nieto as cited in Howard, 2003, p. 199).

Moreover, it is essential to recognize that students are agents who are capable of understanding the world through observations but more importantly, are capable of doing actions that will transform our world:

> Since as human beings, students are and continue to be experiencers, doers, agents, performers – in other words, participants in living – and since they are not born knowing how to do the things and perform the activities that constitute human life, it is wholly perverse to teach our young to be only competent watchers, perceivers, observers, and assessors. (Martin, 1992, p. 175)

Thus, it is ethically mandatory that educators engage in critical teacher reflection in order to be morally responsible towards their students' agency. Only through such critical reflection and dialogue will educators be able to begin to recognize their own biases that are often deeply seated in the effects of colonialism that perpetuate and sustain deficit practices.

Concluding Remarks

Together as stakeholders in education, we share a greater strength in minds, hearts and physical numbers, and that is the beginning light of hope for transforming our current inequitable schooling experiences for our racially marginalized students into future equitable schooling experiences! For as Books (2004) reminds us:

> Our society, like all others, was made by human hands. Nothing is foreordained or carved in stone. It is now entirely possible to establish a system of public schooling that bears witness to our highest ideals, including, justice [i.e. equitable schooling], [educators who

> are informed by critical pedagogy and an anti-neoliberal lens], [always using our agency to create] … [equitable] opportunities, and giving a hand where it is needed for that reason alone: it is needed. (p. 147)

Equity work is complicated by the layered identities of educators, schooling structures/practices/culture, and societal norms, but to work in and around these complexities we must collectively work together. Thus, it is critical that all educators self-identify as life-long learners who challenge, deconstruct, and reconstruct their narratives and teaching practice; for as educators, we are all entangled and engaged in (re-) creating the delicate, sticky, and strong web of "becoming a teacher".

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Looking Forward Through Looking Back:

Using Digital Memory-work in Teaching for Transformation

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Abstract

The emerging field of memory studies has been motivated by the desire to remember the past so as to change the future. Teachers, whether they are pre-service or inservice or teacher educators, have a key role to play in this future-oriented remembering because of their impact on the upcoming generation. A 'looking forward through looking back' way of working with teachers assumes that teachers can be transformers and agents of social change (Giroux, 1988, 2012). Since the 1990s, memory-work methods have been used with teachers to explore how their past influences their present practices. What is missing in this work is memory-work that engages teachers with the digital. In this chapter, we adopt a theoretical lens of *productive remembering* to focus on the idea and place of the digital in teachers' memory-work. We introduce the term 'digital memory-work' to refer to the use of digital media to create digital artifacts (e.g., digital albums, collages, stories, movies, photograph collections, portraits, sound recordings) to remember the past so as to change the future.

"To find the future … requires reactivating the past" (Pinar, 2011, p. 58). The emerging field of memory studies has been motivated by the desire to remember the past so as to change the future (Crownshaw et al., 2010; Gutman et al., 2011; Radstone, 2000). Teachers, whether they are pre-service or inservice or teacher educators, have a key role to play in this future-oriented remembering because of their impact on the upcoming generation. This 'looking forward through looking back' way of working with teachers assumes that teachers can be transformers and agents of social change (Giroux, 1988, 2012). Since the 1990s, memory-work methods have been used with teachers to explore how their past, such as their memories of schooling, of teachers, of educational experiences, influences their present practices (Mitchell & Weber, 1999) or can provide a catalyst for changing practices (Grumet, 2005; Strong-Wilson, 2008). Memory-work methods have become integral in subjects as diverse as literacy (Grumet, 1988) and math (Hobden, 2012) and in relation to social issues such as diaspora and migration (Attarian, 2011), gender-based violence (Chege, 2006), and sexuality and HIV&AIDS (Khau, 2009). What is missing in this work is memory-work that engages teachers with the digital. We understand the digital in education as very broadly inclusive of (but not confined to): the use of various digital tools in, or for, pedagogy (computers, cameras, cellphones, ipods, ipads); digital forms of production within and outside of the classroom (e.g., digital storytelling); the creation of digital archives (e.g., curriculum resources); online spaces for teachers to gather or consult with other teachers; the integration of digital tools within classroom practices; and the use of digital forms of memory-work to engage teachers in deeper critical reflection on their teaching and/or on social issues related to teaching and learning. In this chapter, we adopt a theoretical lens of *productive remembering* (Mitchell et al., 2011; Strong-Wilson et al., 2013) to focus on the idea and place of the digital in teachers' memory-work. We introduce the term 'digital

memory-work' to refer to the use of digital media to create digital artifacts (e.g., digital albums, collages, stories, movies, photograph collections, portraits, sound recordings) to remember the past so as to change the future. We are interested in how digital memory-work can lead to teachers' critical reflection and social action through the re-presentation and re-examination of teachers' past experiences. We believe this is work that can be done with pre-service teachers, inservice teachers and teacher educators. In this chapter, we do not focus on one particular group; however, in future work we anticipate writing further about the implications of digital memory-work for specific audiences and contexts.

We note that in education, there has been a growing incidence of digital productions told by, and from, the lived perspectives of marginalized individuals (Hull & Katz, 2006; Brushwood Rose & Granger, 2012); that some social justice projects in classrooms have fastened on digital media (Medina & Costa, 2010) with renewed attention being paid to issues of power and ideology in reading new media (Crafton, Brennan, & Silvers, 2007; Mills, 2010). Interest has also quickened in the aesthetics of working with new media (Bruce, 2009; Whitin, 2009). Lankshear and Knobel (2013) recently published a handbook on digital literacies that includes several chapters focused on the digital in pedagogy. What is generally lacking is a theorizing and articulation of practices involving memory (in particular, memory-work) and digital media. Hence, our work has two broad objectives: a) To explore how teachers can use digital memory-work for the critical re-examination of their own pedagogic understandings and practices; and b) To investigate how teachers can use digital memory-work to address issues of social justice in diverse educational contexts.

Productive Remembering as Phenomenon and Method

A lens of productive remembering has helped orient our interest in digital memory-work and connect the digital to teachers, memory-work and social action. This is a lens that we have been developing in recent years and that started with a 2008 SSHRC Workshop on productive remembering called "Back to the Future" (Mitchell; Principal Investigator). We have published two edited collections on the subjects, one focused on pedagogy, Memory and Pedagogy (Mitchell et al., 2011) and another focused on different forms of agency and change (Productive Remembering and Social Agency). As we have elaborated it, productive remembering involves bringing forward the past in remembering for the future. In doing so, it connects the autobiographical and personal with the social. As Radstone (2013) points out, memories are "never simply our own." Productive remembering involves both phenomenon (memory *of* something) and method (approaches to remembering, as well as to forgetting). When we looked at phenomena, three salient themes emerged as most topical: *belatedness*, *nostalgia*, and *future-oriented remembering*. The following brief explanations are based on the introduction to *Productive Remembering and Social Agency* (Strong-Wilson et al., 2013), as well as on an article on nostalgia and pre-service teachers (Strong-Wilson et al., 2014).

Belatedness proceeds from the recognition of coming too late to be able to change the past but can free up and create its own space for action and creativity through the desire to change the future, as in Hirsch's work on post-memory in which the felt connection of memories of second-generation survivors of trauma who hear survivor accounts draws on "imaginative investment and creation" (Hirsch, 1997, p. 22) by putting "oneself in the other's position without taking the other's place" (La Capra in Hirsch, 1999, p. 16). *Nostalgia* has been associated with an uncritical and naïve revisiting of a fondly remembered past; it was originally conceived of as

a medical condition, a soldier's sickness that could only be cured by going home. Nostalgia comes from the Latin, *nostos*, which means home (Atia & Davies, 2010). Atia and Davies (2010) suggest that "instead of starting from the assumption that nostalgia is a typically unreflective form of memory, we might say that it gives sensory depth to our awareness of the other places, times and possibilities that are at once integral to who we are and definitively alien to us" (p. 184). Radstone (2010) asks whether nostalgia works more like a prescription lens. Like lenses, nostalgia can change, which makes of nostalgia not a terminal or lifelong illness but "an intermediate or transitional phenomenon", even a "point of departure" that in opening out, could "if we allow it, lead us far from home" (p. 189). A *future-oriented remembering* is tied to the hope that the past will not repeat itself. It has been linked to projects of social action (e.g., Gutman et al., 2010), and is often based on the recognition that there may be no going back; there may only be a going forward to create the past, as in Hirsch and Miller's (2011) *Rites of Return: Diaspora Poetics and the Politics of Memory*. Here, returns derive their "significance precisely from the fact that we can't, we *don't*, 'remember'" (Hartman et al. 2011, 115; emphasis in the original).

As method, productive remembering draws on diverse methods of *memory-work*: a range of tools and methods that stem from the work of German sociologist Haug and associates on what they call 'third person memory' (1987). One of the critical features of Haug's work was the idea of the work of the collective. Each member of a memory group would write in the third person about her own memories and then out of these writings, the group would listen to one another's accounts and consider commonalities, differences, and gaps. Later adapted by a group of researchers in Australia (Crawford et al., 1992), third person memory has been applied to different social issues, ranging from the female body and sexualisation (Haug, 2008) to studies of

gender and memory (Crawford et al 1992) and to memories of schooling (Mitchell & Weber, 1998; Mitchell & Weber, 1999). This work has also been taken into the idea of collection biography (Davies & Gannon, 2006 and Davies, 2008). While participants' experiences of memory-work processes might be therapeutic, the primary purpose is social action. As Haug (2008) explains:

> Memory-work is not intended to provide therapy for suffering persons … If increases in self-recognition, knowledge about socialization processes, competence about language and meaning, and critique of theory are fundamental and prerequisites for the growing ability to act, memory-work aims at such an outcome. (p. 38)

From a social action perspective, memory-work resonates with a generative research process (Ball, 2012) aimed at cultivating a self-reflexive capacity for 'making a difference' to the present and the future. This process may begin with the self, but goes beyond it by "[pointing] outwards and towards the political and social" (Mitchell & Weber, 2005, p. 4).

Memory-work methods embrace the literary, visual (including film and popular media), object-based, and archival. From the point of view of digital memory-work, we are especially interested in the visual work of hooks (1994) and Kuhn (1995) on the use of photographs in working with memory, particularly 'reading into photos.' A generative use of visual images might also be found in Spence's (1986) *Putting Myself in the Picture* and Spence and Solomon's (1995) edited volume *What Can a Woman Do with a Camera?*. What characterizes this work is manipulating visual images. For example, through visual re-enactments, Spence and Martin (1988) used the method of 'staging' (see also Mitchell, 2011) to re-enact portraits of themselves as school girls: not in the way they were depicted in the official school photos of their childhood but how they remembered themselves or wanted to remember themselves as schoolgirls. We may

find that increasingly, digital memory-work may not only explore and interrogate but re-construct memory by extending various digital practices such as digital storytelling (Gubrium, 2009), working digitally to curate albums (Mitchell, Pithouse & Weber, 2009), and using cellphones or video cameras to engage in participatory video (Mitchell, DeLange, & Moletsane, 2012).

We see digital memory-work as a site of 'working through' social action in a 'looking back and looking forward' way. Digital media is largely a social, shared phenomenon that has been driven by productive modes of meaning-making (Lankshear & Knobel, 2008) and in which use of digital media is closely tied to notions of an "agentive self" (Hull & Katz, 2006). An agentive teacher self can be explored through a variety of literacies/multimedia (oral, visual, textual), devices (digital camera, digital video recorders, cell phones and iPods) and programs (iMovie, Voice Thread). As sign systems, each medium (e.g., images, sound, writing, drama, song) has "a different potential for enacting a self" (Urciuoli, p. 191 cited in Hull & Katz, p. 46), within a social structure "anchored in experience and the sense of the real" (Urciuoli, p. 190). We are also interested in how teachers' 'reading' (viewing) of digital texts can productively inform the process by which teachers create digital texts, this based on the adage that readerly and writerly perspectives are two aspects of one continuous action (Barthes, 1986). The logic of reading is "associative: it associates with the material text (with each of its sentences) *other* ideas, *other* images, *other* significations" (Barthes, 1986, p. 31; emphasis in the original). As part of digital memory-work, we therefore also include how teachers 'read' digital texts as well as produce digital texts.

Provoking (and Doing) Digital Memory-Work

In this section we offer four examples from our own teaching and research using digital memory-work. Some of this digital memory-work starts more in reception, but could, and has, served as provocations for digital memory-work. Some involves work with pre-service teachers (Radford, Morrison) and some with practicing teachers (Mitchell, Strong-Wilson).

Resonant Voices (Strong-Wilson)

In 2007-08, Arden (a Grade 6 teacher) [1] embarked on a collaboration with Blue Metropolis, an organization devoted to the promotion of literature and literacy. At the time, Arden was part of a research collaboration focused on new technologies. The collaboration invited teachers to generate curricula grounded in their own classrooms while engaged in a process of action research (See: http://recit.csnewfrontiers.qc.ca/lwl/Research_Publications.html). The program provided teachers with class sets of laptops for a period of two years. "Community Heroes" was Arden's culminating "Learning with Laptops" project (see also Strong-Wilson, 2011; Strong-Wilson et al., 2012). Arden's classroom was composed of a significant number of Mohawk students. The class decided to pair with a Cree community in Northern Quebec. Each class would produce a book that would inform the other about their community.

Arden's students decided on the theme of "community heroes" and chose to include such individuals as: the school custodian, a special education teacher, a peacekeeper, a saint and a woman who feeds the geese and ducks. Several of the portraits highlighted people who were motivated by a sense of social justice or community values or who had struggled with

[1] Pseudonym.

marginalization and overcome major life challenges. One example was the school custodian, who made sure that children were dressed properly in winter and had food to eat at lunch. Another was the woman who had quit school, worked as a dishwasher in the UK and in coming to Canada, became part of the Literacy Council at the local YWCA; she devoted her time to helping others who like herself wanted to become literate. In many cases, the portraits uncovered details that the students had not known before. For instance, the "Duck Lady" was legendary in town. Upon visiting her to find out why she fed the geese and ducks, the children helped de-mystify local fears and stories.

To the collaboration with Blue Metropolis Arden brought her interest in digital media. While Blue Metropolis published the 11 portraits as a book, Arden co-produced them as digital vignettes using Voice Thread, which were then celebrated in a community event and posted on the web. Voice Thread is a freeware that allows for the juxtaposition of sound with images (See: http://voicethread.com/#q.b87548). The digital portraits engaged memory-work through eliciting details of a life-story. More than the Blue Metropolis book, the Voice Thread production foregrounded the children's own narration of their stories. The digital memory-work, in the sense in which we are developing it in this chapter, really began in the context of an interview with Arden, who was continually drawn back to this digital storytelling project (Strong-Wilson et al., 2012). The deepest element that engaged her was student voice and in particular, the voice of a Mohawk student: a voice to which she had not yet been attuned (Aoki, 2005). The student's voice was also juxtaposed with an image, a community church drawn from the present but that pulled on the weight of the past. This juxtaposition occurred against the background of the Oka Crisis, a not so historical Mohawk-Canadian/white confrontation that she would have

remembered. Here was where the real digital memory-work began—but where the project (such as it was) concluded: with her interest in the Mohawk student's digital storytelling.

Memory Waltz (Morrison)

Like Voice Thread as provocation, my (Connie's) contribution begins with a digital text positioned to provoke memory work. In my teaching, I often use a music video entitled "Memory Waltz" by Rawlins Cross as a vehicle to demonstrate the power of situated knowledge (See: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsEN6ZawgnU). "Memory Waltz" evokes a complex reading of Newfoundland and Labrador's cultural devastation in the wake of the 1992 cod moratorium, when for many, life quite literally felt like a "sea of despair" (Kelly, 2010, p. 35). Upon viewing this text, my students regularly note a "feeling" that resonates with a kind of "sensory depth" (Atia and Davies, 2010). Often, those who have grown up near the ocean tell me that when they watch it, they can smell the salt air. Examined here, the traditional Celtic music and iconic images are questioned for their power to (re)shape collective memory and for nostalgia's place in that remembering.

Students reading this video note images that juxtapose emotionally disconnected musicians with joyful representations of outport life, when cod were plentiful and men were well versed in the literacies of the sea (Corbett, 2010). At once, they note familiar images of rurality versus those of schooled culture; a community of purposeful work versus the desolation brought by unemployment. Students see the musicians' manicured hands against the weathered ones of the fishermen. They compare the colourful representations of ocean swells, vibrant weathered faces, mending nets, and salt spray to the black and white still images of individual men drowning in despair, as iconic newspaper headlines work to reinforce a collective memory of a

time of loss. Moving images depict kitchen parties, accordion playing, and scenes of families dancing, or "plankin'er down". Collectively, the images and music depict a kind of myth; one that resonates deeply for many as it draws them back to an idealized time of joyful simplicity. It is a kind of "mythmaking (that) seems to be the case in many instances of memorialization" (Bride, 2010, p. 226).

Over the years, many students claim, longingly, "That reminds me of my Nan and Pop." Kelly (2010) reminds that, "Nostalgia produces, out of loss, not just expressions of sentiment; nostalgia also produces subjects who seek solace" (p. 37). This solace seeking was brought to a painful fruition a few years ago when a young male student wept in class when we viewed this video. His loss was tangible, perhaps made more so by the haunting notes of a tin whistle. "I was supposed to have that life," he shared. "Ever since I was little, my Pop used to take me out on the boats, and he taught me to mend nets. But that's all gone, and I had to move to town. I didn't want to be a teacher. But this is what I had left."

A young woman from Southern Ontario, who experienced a similar social and economic loss with the fall in the auto industry recognized, "I may not know what it smells like on a fishing wharf, but I know those faces. I recognize the hopelessness and pain of having your identity taken away because your industry has failed." Rather than acting as a text that quaintly reiterates popular forms of memory, the oft regulated and denied nature of a culture's loss (Kelly, 2009), "Memory waltz" provides a kind of avowing for collective grief, a melodic breaking of institutionalized silence, resonating in anguish and grief for a kind of life that is no more. By examining such nostalgic urges, we might learn, not only about our past, but also about our future (Kelly, 2010).

Reading Deeper (Radford)

I (Linda) have been piloting (with Avril Aitken) a movie-making project with pre-service teachers in the final year of their program (Radford & Aitken, accepted; Aitken & Radford, 2013). The project includes methods of productive remembering as part of an interdisciplinary course that focuses on contemporary social issues, the teacher's role in transformation, a critical examination of subjectivity, and the teacher self. Working to create a space where students can engage with what they are blinded by or defend against thinking about through what their own stories reveal (what Taubman (2012, p. 9) phrases as "knowledge from and of the unconscious"), we ask students to produce a three minute film about an uncomfortable moment they experienced in a recent professional internship. The films incorporate a three-hundred word script, still images, video and sound track and shared experiences of learning that are deeply significant and in many cases traumatic. Revealing their positionality in relation to self and Other, hierarchies of power and authority, and their beliefs in the purpose of education, the students' memories of the classroom are powerful texts for social justice curricula.

One example is *Reading Deeper*. The English Language Arts pre-service teacher's video clip is about her struggle with the use of the "n" word when teaching the text *Underground to Canada* (1977). Her short video calls attention to how disrupted she felt when confronting the history of race relations. The title, *Reading Deeper*, also points to her cognizance of her position as white female in the classroom as she juxtaposes risky cross-cultural stories with sunny pictures of white students accompanied by upbeat music. What lies within this discordance is the "knowledge that can't tolerate one's knowing that one knows" (Lacan, 1974, as cited in Felman, 1987, p. 77). Like the dream unpacked in analysis, the images and narration point to the difficulty she has with the sinister stories showcased (about the holocaust, abuse of women in

Iran), which lurk behind but somehow nightmarishly break through the light of the day represented by the stylized still photos of picture perfect ethnically homogenous (white) Canadian classrooms.

Drawing upon Mitchell's (2011) attention to visual participatory methodologies in supporting social change, this research has the teacher looking at herself within the space of the classroom to reflect psychically on her place in the institution, with youth, and consider the texts she puts in front of them and her position in relation to those texts. Through a double mirror of reading, the teacher examines her own struggles and desires around texts in the process of reading her students' experiences of reading. Working with only a brief script, the teacher storyteller immerses herself in thinking about every possible conflict, especially how she can possibly teach those texts as a white woman and risk becoming part of a colonizing hierarchy of oppression. She wants to read these stories with her students and do it in a way that will be enlightening and not traumatizing. She is also concerned about intruding on her students' childhood innocence at the same time as fearing they might identify with the aggressor and use the "n" word on the playground.

This digital production makes legible the teacher candidate's struggles with how to confront texts that deal with difficult knowledge and that involve memory-work. As Farley, Kennedy and Matthews (2013) note, this research reveals that "[i]t is where understanding resists symbolization on screen…that fantasies of the ideal self as teacher begin to unravel and to provoke new forms of thought" (p. 5) .

'Me and my Cellphone': Digital Memory-Work through Digital Retreats (Mitchell)

Something that my (Claudia's) colleagues in South Africa and I have been exploring in the context of working with teachers in rural areas of the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape are 'digital retreats' where teachers come together to share their cellphilm productions (Mitchell, DeLange & Moletsane, 2012). For the past year, teachers have been working on a cellphone project to produce cellphilms, which are films "made with a cellphone and for a cellphone" (Dockney & Tomaselli, 2009). The idea of working with comes out of the recognition that the one technology that is 'for sure' in rural areas is the cellphone in that there is widespread use of cellphone technology throughout South Africa (Mitchell, DeLange & Moletsane, 2012) While the teachers have been producing cellphilms in workshop settings to explore issues related to poverty reduction and addressing HIV&AIDS, an unintended outcome has been the way individual teachers have embarked upon producing their own short cellphilms alongside the group productions. These cellphilms, most three to five minutes in length, offer a set of reflexive moments framed in the social, documenting aspects of their everyday lives, their families, and classrooms, and in some cases explicitly linked to memory. Loretta, for example, filmed 5 minutes of 'the homestead' which as Tsitsi Dangarembga's novel, *Nervous Conditions*, highlights, is so central to much of sub-Saharan cultural life even if one lives in the town or city. Her carefully filmed segment depicts a group of male relatives and friends cutting up a goat that has been just slaughtered and is being prepared for a *braai* (barbeque). There is no real sound track except for an occasional comment by one of the men, speaking in Khosa, and sporadic bursts of laughter or exclamation. Loretta takes us through the process of the slaughter, step by step, occasionally panning to the wide open landscape, and then to up close shots of someone's 4 X 4 or brand new BMW, all haphazardly parked in the *kraal* (homestead). There is something

haunting about the juxtaposition in one segment of traditional and ultra-modern worlds, capped by humour when one of the men places the goat's head on top of his own at the film's end.

Watching this episode, we, as an audience, are caught up in what is more of a present past than a present in rural South Africa, although rituals like these are regularly carried out during festivals, weddings, births and funerals. And while Loretta's cellphilm seems on the one hand to be removed from teaching and the classroom, at the same time it offers a visual representation of what teachers, children, parents and communities are dealing with in rural areas in an era that is inflected by/with HIV&AIDS, high employment, and new forms of displacement (Moletsane et al., 2009). Loretta's cellphilm highlights the potential for capturing these pasts, but also the ways in which digital memory-work (using accessible tools like cellphones) pulls on the very ordinary or everyday.

Digital Memory-Work and Productive Remembering

We are interested in the potential of digital media for productive forms of memory-work with teachers to contribute to teachers as agents of social change. The four examples (Resonant Voices, Memory Waltz, Reading Deeper, Me and my Cellphone) speak to digital media as contributing to a more future-oriented remembering, first by virtue of the media itself, which invites greater participation on the part of the teachers as well as of their students. For instance, the elementary students (in Resonant Voices) had greater control over what story gets told when their voices were foregrounded, which profoundly touched the teacher. Though highly localized in time and space, The Memory Waltz travels across locations and provokes memories of altered futures. As digital portrait, Reading Deeper situates a student teacher's anxiety about issues of racism in her practice within the future, while Me and my Cellphone uses mobile technology to

capture the everyday present past: rituals that potentially inform rural teaching for future teachers. Digital memory-work allows teachers to see themselves using a realm of possible lenses from which they both draw their experience and then use to represent it (everything available in popular culture – i.e. music, image, film clips, art, painting and other art forms, twitter, facebook). Given that much space and openness, the unexpected often emerges. Digital memory work can capitalize on what is opportune or serendipitous, through the capture of 'on site' of images or sounds that seem relevant, though the meaning of the experience may be postponed until later reflection (e.g., the cellphilm). Digital texts can allow for highly codified, audience specific messages to be transmitted about the culture of education and personal teaching practices that then becomes a forum for possible dialogue or conversely a private/public space that introspective educators can return.

Productive uses of the digital as memory-work would seem to involve both an openness to what may be found through the production/creative process (as in Reading Deeper) as well as to the vulnerability that may be attendant on working aesthetically with digital media (on an "aesthetics of vulnerability" in teacher education, see Smits, in press). In several of the pieces, digital memory-work is provoked by 'reading' or 'viewing' digital artifacts and being provoked to 'read deeper.' The digital frees up a space unrestricted by language or any one mode of representation in which to write the self. These symbolizations allow for a process of reading deeper that pushes further and deeper modes of reflection. The text the teacher inspects is the self; the pedagogic moment becomes the self as the location for learning. Here teachers might learn about their complicity in colonial views of education that they philosophically oppose yet in which they are unwitting participants. Through symbolization, teachers can read how they as

practitioners might be located within these histories of education and are now able to disrupt the system based on the new knowledge they gain from reading deeper.

Ethical and Pedagogical Issues

At the same time, *i*n thinking about the potential uses of digital memory-work for subjective and social reconstruction, we also want to flag, early on, key issues arising from such work, particularly ethical and pedagogical issues. Digital media are strongly associated with sharing publicly, either on the Internet or in a 'public screening' context (including a classroom), thus raise issues of private/public as well as audience. Simon (2011) has raised the question of the relationship between the image and thought, through his work in critically examining curatorial exhibits of 'difficult' knowledge. How are we/teachers/students to respond (in the moment) to sound and/or images, especially disturbing ones (as the ELA teacher reflects on the "N" word, and the image of herself as responding to the "N" word in Radford's work with Aitken, or the goat slaughter)? What is the intent of the creator/teacher as social agent? How does nostalgia shape teacher response and provoke re-tellings, as in Morrison's description of student teacher responses to the Memory Waltz? Traces of (unconscious) nostalgia also echo in Arden's hearing of the voice of her Mohawk student: the romanticizing of Indigenous peoples.

Eppert (2002) questions "dominant Western conventions of engagement" which begin with identification. She inquires into their appropriateness especially with traumatic testimony of stories of suffering (p. 77). She suggests that we need to look critically and more closely at our own modes of reception of literary, artistic and other modes of representation, turning to Megan Boler's (1999) *Feeling Power: Emotions and Education* to emphasize "that those who have been oppressed do not seek empathy but rather justice" (p. 89). As Roland Barthes (1986) has pointed

out, response is a form of production. In what ways might it be productive to have teachers read digital productions initially as 'responses'—for instance, in the students' choices of photographs to take and then to show in their Voice Thread productions?

Building on the work of Bullough (2011) in relation to self-study, along with other work in the area of participatory visual studies (see for example Milne, Mitchell & DeLange, 2011), we have identified the following questions as central to developing digital memory-work as an ethical pedagogical as well as research practice: In what sense is digital memory-work an ethical enterprise? What is / could be the nature of the ethical conflicts confronting digital memory-work researchers and teachers and how can we think about them? And finally, what guidelines, principles or framework can facilitate ethical digital memory-work? For example, in digital memory-work with teachers, how might we look at the following issues: ownership/copyright (who owns the digital 'products'?); agency and decision-making (who makes decisions? Whose decisions count more or most and why?); generativity and social change (So what? What difference does this really make? And to or for whom?); confidentiality and anonymity (Whose identities should / can be protected? Can confidentiality and anonymity really be guaranteed?) and culture/ethos/values (Whose values should be used as standards of judgement? What about conflicting values? Whose values count most and why? Whose values should be open to change?)

Conclusion: Digital Memory-work and Teaching for Transformation

The individual examples that we have offered of digital memory-work with teachers represent a promising set of practices which look to the past with a view to looking to (and influencing) the future. Taken together they highlight the importance of drawing further on

digital technology to study the ways in which they might become part of a 'living archive' which could serve as both a digital repository of digital memory-work studies, as well as a participatory space for teachers and researchers, and teachers and teachers, to work together. We are reminded of the creative uses of restricted access sites such as the one created for the Centre for Visual Methodologies for Social Change at the University of KwaZulu-Natal where participating teachers, community health care workers and researchers have been working with community-produced photographs and video texts related to HIV& AIDS (DeLange & Mitchell, 2011; deLange et al, 2010).[2] Indeed, such work also makes it possible to interrogate and map out over time such features of memory as social context, age, gender, and experience, all of which might contribute to deepening an understanding of teacher identity and contributing to teaching for transformation.

While we have identified some of the ethical and pedagogical concerns of engaging in digital memory-work, we must of course not see this work as unproblematic and question "the discursive production of memory, history, representation, desire and knowledge" (Kelly, 1997, p. 48). How do we/teachers know what is missing? How do we/teachers know that we don't know? Mezirow (2003) suggests that in any project of transformative education, we must develop reflective judgment and critical self-reflection. If digital stories are to contribute to a collective remembering by teachers and for the future, it makes sense to also consider a collective forgetting. Meaning is at once revealed and silenced depending on the sources, structures and frames of reference that shape how we and others see the world (Mezirow, 2003). Seen in another way, Hall (1996) reminds us that understanding depends not only on how language is

[2] See also a National Research Foundation study, Not Leaving Data in the Dark led by Naydene DeLange at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in South Africa which is look at the ethical and legal issues, as well as the pedagogical possibilities for several research teams to use a digital archive in order to work with (and learn from) shared visual data.

externalized but also on what audiences bring. Equally significant is the idea that textuality is a site of power and political struggle wherein individuals attempt to create meaning in the space between heterogeneous intent and multiplicity of meaning. As part of digital memory-work, we must attend to the silenced and otherwise neglected back stories.

By disrupting the notion that digital stories bear a kind of unmediated authority as the visible increasingly becomes privileged (Scott, 1991), we/teachers are also left questioning what to make of what is left on the editing room floor. How do we acknowledge the desires and motives of selective omission? How do we trouble that which has been left untold, unexploited, unexposed? A poststructuralist vision demands that we attend to the notion that telling one story necessitates a silencing of another version of that story. Kelly (1997) reminds us to interrogate our desire to present something as truth. What possesses us to tell the versions we do and keep private the ones we do not share? Are we even capable of knowing such things? And how do we navigate the terrain that demands that every truth has been constructed? Scott's caution about the privileging of that which is made visible in autobiography as a window to the authentic self is equally salient here as we progress with a tentativeness and a sensitivity toward interrogating the rationale behind the constructed narratives we share. Within the psychic process of remembering, particularly for those things which hold us emotionally and nostalgically, Huyssen (2000) reminds us that "we cannot discuss personal, generational, or public memory separate from the enormous influence of the new media as carriers of all forms of memory" (p. 29). By adopting a gaze that is attentive to the gaps between representation and silence, between memory and forgetting, between conflict and apparent resolution, we/teachers might be more fully committed to a transformative vision of disciplined multiplicity and ultimately a more socially just world.

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The Edge of Counselling:

Mindful Negotiation of Emotions Towards Transforming Learning~Teaching

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Abstract

Learning and learner environments are enmeshed with a vast range of emotion, yet schools are set up for teachers to focus primarily on curriculum delivery, often relegating emotional terrain to the counsellor down the hall. We explore teacher engagement with emotion (both their own and that of learners) through the lens of Transformative Inquiry (TI), a dialogic, reflexive, relational and mindful approach to learning to teach. Building on data of TI mentoring sessions between pre-service teachers and their instructors, we consider the *edge of counselling*, a place where the worlds of teaching and therapeutic involvement overlap. Our perspective as educators is enhanced through the inclusion of a transpersonal psychologist during the data analysis. We discuss how: emotions are often inadequately understood, acknowledged, and discussed within a professional teaching practice; practicing careful discernment supports the negotiation of emotional terrain, shared and courageous vulnerability facilitates emotional engagement; mindful intention supports navigation of the edge of counselling; and emotions can act as beneficial catalysts towards transformation.

"I don't feel prepared to deal with emotions as a teacher. I'm not sure how well I handle my own, so I'm hesitant to deal with my students in that way. I don't feel confident."

Pre-service teacher

Learning to teach is complex. To address this, a team of researchers at the University of Victoria have been developing Transformative Inquiry (TI), a course for pre-service teachers built on dialogic, reflexive, relational and mindful practices. The instructors of TI ask their students early in a course: What are you wondering about in terms of your upcoming practicum? Their thoughts are collected on the board as a collage of wonderings:

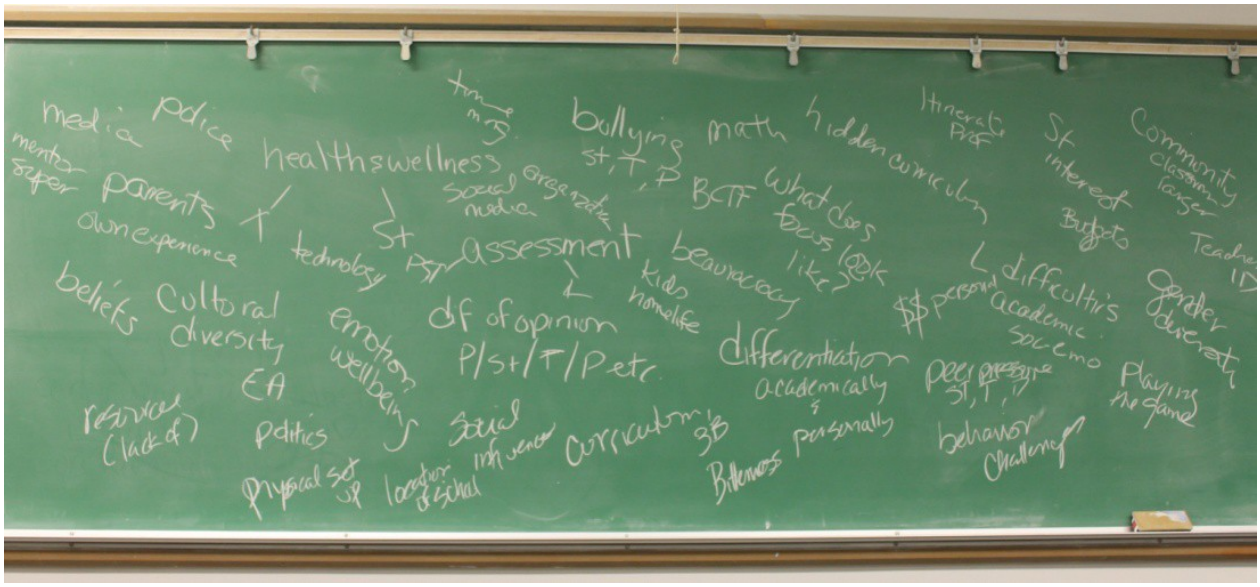

Figure 1: Pre-service teacher responses to the question posed by TI instructor

From their wide-ranging perspectives, burning topics include cultural diversity, hidden curriculum, emotional wellbeing, bureaucracy, students' home lives, bullying (by students, teachers, principals), and how to work well with an educational assistant. The last two things

added to this particular list (after prompting from the instructor) were math and delivery of the curriculum.

Four things are noteworthy about this collection of concerns. First, similar lists have been created in multiple TI classrooms, indicating that our pre-service teachers are aware of the complexity and have significant wonderings around how to engage in these topics as teachers. Second, it is typical that the concerns that are first expressed are not around curriculum delivery as much as the intricate elements that compose classroom dynamics. Third, our pre-service teachers want to avoid falling into, what our team member Maureen (a retired principal and educator) called the 3Bs: bitterness, blaming and burning-out. Fourth, all of the unearthed topics are tethered in some way to emotions, be that of the learner or the teacher.

All of these points are interrelated, but it is the last point that is the particular focus of this paper, as there is much uncertainty amongst our students as to how to handle emotions in the classroom. We refer to this unfamiliar affective terrain as the edge of counselling where the fields of teaching and therapy overlap and the way forward is often ambiguous and unfamiliar. We base our discussion in five salient qualities. First, that emotions are often inadequately understood, acknowledged, and discussed within a professional teaching practice. Three valuable qualities need attention in this context: practicing careful discernment, shared and courageous vulnerability and mindful intention. These support navigation of the edge of counseling leading to a fifth quality where emotions can act as beneficial catalysts towards transformation.

Transformative Inquiry

The TI approach is the exclusive focus and practice of a required course in the teacher education program at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. Students begin the course

by connecting with their "path with heart" (Chambers, 2004) as they each unearth salient issues about which they are personally and professionally passionate. Typically, they choose topics relevant to the context of their own teaching practice and therefore, topics that also matter to other educators. Many of the topics in Figure 1 become starting points for their TI journeys. Within their inquiry, these pre-service teachers are encouraged to explore open-ended, or "unbounded" questions (Henderson, 1992) and to follow where the inquiry takes them, rather than looking for prescribed outcomes or a final product. They spend the course investigating their ideas reflexively and relationally within larger educational and sociocultural contexts. The TI process is difficult to explain, so we embed examples below in order to better illustrate (or see Tanaka, 2014 for further description).

In the context of TI, we believe that teachers are transformers within their classrooms. We extend this notion to include teachers as transforming as well; as we engage with our students, we are also changed. Our view assumes a type of reciprocity between learning and teaching, hence we often refer to pre-service teachers as learner~teacher~researchers as they concurrently engage in learning, teaching and researching. Additionally, we believe that all educators are in the state of be~coming; both being teachers and becoming teachers simultaneously. We use a tilde between these terms, and others in our writing, to demonstrate the fluidity and mutual reciprocity of these concepts. TI offers an approach that develops teacher capacity by relying heavily on the transfer of control from instructor to learner, thus engaging in what Freire termed the "death of the professor" (p. 20 in Vella, 2002). Indeed, dispositional transformation is key as we work towards changing the internalized social norms that beget traditional methods of learning and teaching.

While many teacher educators strive to move teacher training into a more transformative space, the inherited positivism and transmissive practice of teacher as 'sage on the stage' in large part goes woefully unquestioned by pre-service teachers. This is not out of an absence of concern or recognition, rather there is a lack of genuine opportunity and a purposeful space to consider educational intention; the reasons we are educators, and what matters for our learners. The TI course offers time and space for such explorations.

Like many of our colleagues, we support inquiry as a means for pre-service teachers to address their concerns and develop their practice. The TI approach builds on a conventional understanding of inquiry advanced by Kalmbach Philips and Carr (2006), Fichtman Dana and Yendol-Hoppey (2009), Clarke and Erickson (2003), and Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009). In TI, we focus carefully on concepts such as disrupting binaries (Kumashiro, 2004), nourishing the learning spirit (Battiste, 2009), touchstone stories (Strong-Wilson, 2008; Tanaka, 2011), layered and generous listening (Schultz, 2003; Thayer-Bacon, 2003), relational accountability (Wilson, 2008), mindfulness (Nhat Hanh, 1992), accessing other ways of knowing (Snowber, 2012) and emotional engagement (Rosenberg, 2003). This is done with the overarching intent of acting differently as teachers and transforming our practice.

TI is a process aimed at increasing pre-service teachers' capacity to negotiate the complexities of today's diverse classrooms and is characterized by a motivation to delve into liminal and non-discrete spaces, such as those between the personal and professional, the curriculum-as-planned and the curriculum-as-lived (Aoki, 2005), and the overlapping worlds of teaching and therapeutic endeavors. We strive to help pre-service teachers find the ideas that intrigue, unsettle or discomfort them, the questions that niggle and worry in the background of their teaching. TI allows time and space to examine the vexing issues, ideas and complexities

born out of direct experience in the classroom or related to the classroom, but that do not dwell in the neat boxes of understanding that schooling tends to promote.

TI aims to avoid falling into routine and perfunctory practice, and to resist blaming others when the tools in the toolbox fail to provide anticipated results. To cultivate the responsive and flexible kinds of practitioners that education practice demands, pre-service teachers need experience living with and adapting to the uncertainty that arises from the complexity of teaching practice. The process of TI helps to render the familiar strange (Greene, 1995) and to think in fresh ways about questions and ideas which often seem routine, comfortable, and proverbial (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2000).

Critical to facilitating the process of TI is a mentoring relationship that develops between the course instructor and each pre-service teacher. Building upon trust and addressing poignant issues identified by the mentee around be~coming a teacher, the instructor offers guidance, encouragement, and pragmatic assistance (Clutterbuck, 2001) towards negotiating this unfamiliar terrain. The instructor supports the TI process in numerous ways including: modeling the TI process by sharing personal inquiry journeys, building awareness of institutional structures and power dynamics, suggesting students pay attention to those they are thinking with, and examining the dispositional lens through which they see the world.

Research Team and Approach

The TI process offered in the course is currently the focus of a 3-year study funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Within this project, members of a diverse and collaborative community of teacher educators, teachers, and pre-service teachers are exploring TI to better articulate the complex and imprecise process, to improve the course, and to

find ways of expanding TI into the large educational context. The authors of his paper are a subset of this group. Over the past two years, data has been gathered from over 200 participants in the form of transcribed mentor~mentee sessions, student, instructor and researcher reflexive pieces (incorporating images and writing) and post-course focus groups and surveys.

Overarching project questions include: (i) dispositional development (In what ways does participating in the inquiry and mentoring process influence disposition?); (ii) self-directed topic emergence (How does utilizing a personally emergent inquiry topic affect professional inquiry development? How does mentoring assist this?); (iii) reflexivity (In what ways does reflexivity influence a deepening of the Transformative Inquiry approach? What is difficult about reflexivity?); (iv) relational accountability (How do mentor expectations towards relational accountability affect the process? What effect does partnering with peers have?); and (v) teacher efficacy (How does using a Transformative Inquiry approach shape teaching ability?). These research questions are related to existing theoretical perspectives on such matters including adult dialogue (Vella, 2002), living inquiry (Meyer, 2008), organic inquiry (Curry & Wells, 2006), and research as ceremony (Wilson, 2008).

This paper however, takes a different direction based in findings derived from the data. Our intention here is to further understand the often subtle and intuitive characteristics of the edge of counselling. Specifically we ask: What does emotional engagement look like within the TI course? How do instructors deal appropriately with these emotions? And, building on previous work (see Tanaka, Nichols & Farish, 2011), how might emotions be entry points into transformation? To this aim, we draw on two data sources in particular; significant transcripts from mentoring sessions, and researcher reflexive pieces that highlight emotional engagement.

Initially, the mentoring session data led us to the belief that the instinctual space of emotional engagement is critical in the development of TI; acknowledging and 'listening' to what occurs here becomes transformational. This space however, is vague and fluid, difficult to understand and define. Because of this, we asked Indrus, a registered clinical counsellor who specializes in transpersonal psychology to join our discussion and analysis. She familiarized herself with the data, and then facilitated a daylong workshop for us to further analyze the edge of counselling.

In the workshop we considered numerous mentoring sessions from the data where heightened emotions were present. We discussed each example from the instructors' viewpoint, highlighting places where we felt uncomfortable with the emotion and/or unsure that the instructor had handled the situation in the best way. We began to wonder about the places where teaching and counselling interact and how to best attend to these delicate situations. While the instructors in TI do not intentionally act as counsellors, often their role becomes blurred as they facilitate meaningful conversations, and must negotiate vulnerable and emotionally laden spaces. As we spoke, Indrus interlaced comments into the conversation from her perspective and later elaborated on what transpersonal psychology might offer to these scenarios.

As a team, we left this workshop energized and exhausted. We had a collective feeling that we had uncovered a portion of a topic that needed further consideration. In particular, we realized that we had diverse perspectives around the edge of counselling, and that articulating these would be useful in order to draw out better understanding. As a follow-up activity we each wrote reflexively around the prompt: To me, the edge of counselling… This writing was informed by our involvement in the data analysis discussions over the past year and a half and our own lived experience with the TI process either as instructors or students in the course.

Our thinking here was to apply a reflexive technique through a common writing activity, where attention was turned onto us as researchers as an integral part of the social phenomenon being studied (Ahern, 1999). Our assumptions, beliefs and feelings around the edge of counselling were carefully described and acknowledged in order to make more tangible "the complicated interconnections between the topic of [our] gaze, and [our] ideas, values and beliefs, as well as the feelings [we attach] to each of these" (Chambers, 2004, p. 2). Our knowledge as researchers was considered as a valuable source of data (Oberg, 1989), and to provide veracity this knowledge has been recursively examined and contextualized for relational accountability within the broader context of researchers, scholars, practitioners, artists, and thinkers who also engage with the topic (Chambers, 2004; Wilson, 2008).

After our initial writing around the prompt, we each read our piece aloud in a research team meeting, gave written feedback around what we heard as we listened to each other, and then each person made revisions to their own writing as they saw fit. Due to the complexity of the edge of counselling, it is important to notice that some of us reacted to the prompt through an interpretive exploration and others through a descriptive one. After each team member felt comfortable they had expressed their beliefs accurately, we carefully reread and discussed the responses, identifying salient qualities of the mentor~mentee relationship. Based in our combined experience and identification of resonant ideas arising from the prompt, we find the following qualities to be useful in further understanding of the edge of counseling. These qualities exist in a fluid Aokian space. For instance, instructors listen carefully for what each pre-service teacher is negotiating and finds appropriate learning opportunities from there. Table 1 identifies the qualities and provides contextual description as they relate to the practice of teaching.

Quality	Context
Emotions are often inadequately understood, acknowledged, and discussed within a professional teaching practice	Cultural norm dominating the professional teaching environments of North America
Practicing careful discernment supports the negotiation of emotional terrain	A practice that values and encourages emotional engagement
Shared and courageous vulnerability facilitates emotional engagement	A practice that values and encourages emotional engagement
Mindful intention support navigation of the edge of counselling	A practice that values and encourages emotional engagement
Emotions can act as beneficial catalysts towards transformation and for us as a research team	An outcome of integrating the above qualities that augments the cultural norm of disengagement with emotions

Table 1. Five qualities and their contextual descriptions ascertained through resonant analysis of the responses to the prompt, "to me the edge of counseling…"

The first of these qualities is indicative of the muddled cultural norm around emotions within the teaching profession. Poor attention to emotions creates a kind of fog where there is confusion around what is and is not part of the teacher job description. Hence, a boundary can be created between what aspects of the educational experience a teacher is willing to attend to. This boundary can vary from person to person, but it is within this fog that we find the edge of

counselling. The next three qualities, practicing careful discernment, shared and courageous vulnerability, and mindful intention, are characteristics of the edge of counselling that when harmoniously integrated, support the final quality to emerge, as emotions become catalysts for transformation.

The Edge of Counselling

Before further examining the five qualities, we share two vignettes that give a sense of the emotional predicaments that arise within the mentoring process. The first describes a situation where the emotion present was a missed opportunity; the second portrays emotions that override the purpose of the course. These are common examples that might show up in any given group of students. We are highlighting them not because they are unusual, but because they exemplify some of the issues that concern us at the edge of counselling.

Olivia[1] and instructor 1: What's good about my kid?

Olivia's inquiry revolved around a concern over clutter in the classroom; she asked, "How does the aesthetic dimension of space in the classroom affect teachers and students?" As Olivia discussed this topic with Instructor 1, a seemingly unrelated story from her practicum also surfaced. An upset mother had confronted Olivia and her mentor teacher after being hammered with a list of problematic behaviours exhibited by her child that day. In response, the mother simply asked: "What's good about my kid?" Neither the mentor teacher nor Olivia was able to offer a response. The awkward silence of this incident stayed with Olivia and it was significant

[1] All participant names are pseudonyms.

enough that she raised it two different times during the mentoring session. Instructor 1 however, did not pursue further discussion around it.

Amanda and instructor 2: Adrenaline junky.

Amanda's inquiry began by trying to understand a fretful child in her class. She wondered, "What can I do for children with anxiety?" In her sessions with Instructor 2, Amanda quickly began to discuss her own experiences of anxiety, posing the question, "What happens to adults who are unidentified?" She spent much of the mentoring time describing her personal stories in great detail. Instructor 2 encouraged Amanda to share and did not interrupt or redirect her focus. Subsequent mentoring session continued to concentrate primarily on Amanda's personal stories. Amanda later wrote that she liked the attention she was getting from sharing in this way, "I came to the conclusion that I am an adrenaline junky. I love the high. It is like riding a roller coaster when I have anxiety."

These vignettes are examples of the kinds of issues that can come up in the mentoring sessions. What follows is a weaving of these stories into the five qualities derived from our team's reflexive writing with different possibilities highlighted. Note that the long quotes are excerpts from each of the authors' response to the prompt: *To me the edge of counselling…*

Quality One: Emotions Are Often Poorly Understood, Acknowledged, and Discussed within a Professional Teaching Practice

For many of our participants, dealing with emotional terrain in the classroom felt uncomfortable and was often avoided. Many expressed the belief that being a counsellor is a separate job from that of teacher and believed they have a lack of expertise with emotions. Yet,

emotions are present in every classroom and each learning environment. The above vignettes give examples of this phenomenon within the TI process, and Lisa grappled with this issue:

> [I am aware of] the power I possess in my role as mentor and [sometimes] I question if I even know what to do with that power. I know many [of my] students have deeply personal touchstone stories that they want/need/should explore because such exploration will open space for them to become more of who they want to be… How do I support them in doing so without letting go too soon or pushing them too far? How did I get in the way of [each student's] story? Did I validate [their] experience, diminish it? Do I really care about these stories?

Maureen emphasized this point, "As a person with no formal training in counselling, the pressure to deal with moments of emotional vulnerability correctly sometimes creates anxiety and insecurity for me as an instructor."

Lisa's musings indicate how the edge of counselling can be an uncomfortable space for the instructor as well as the mentee. Lisa also sheds light on how Instructor 1 may have been feeling around using a distraught mother's comment as an entry point into inquiry. When we are of the mindset that counselling is not our job as teachers, why should we care about these stories? Why would we want to go there if our job is focused on curriculum delivery?

Of course, amidst the fog, teaching is also considered a caring or humanizing profession (Noddings, 2013; Bartolome, 1994). Attending to the edge of counselling helps us to reimagine pedagogical possibilities so that emotional engagement becomes an integral part of our practice. Vanessa, past TI student and team member, depicted her understanding of the edge of counselling through the following poem, which works to disrupt the image of a teacher as a

knowledge disseminator and looks instead to the development of a disposition more mindful of underlying emotions in the classroom.

The bell

The busy bell clatters on,

It has no time to rest.

It is too busy filling minds

With syntax, spelling and correctness.

Shh! Hush! Sit! Stop!

Don't you know the rules?

Mine is the only voice that counts,

So stop that shouting you fools!

When I say listen,

You better know that means obey.

Criss-cross-applesauce on the carpet

And (for heaven's sakes) put those jellybeans away!

The mob of desks draws closer

The bell strains every chord

To lift up the blessed answer

To tame again, the teaming hoard.

School bells are made for ringing

No ears formed on its smooth head.

What might it hear in those voices

That pound out printing in gray lead?

The toolkit grows heavy,

No rubric, strategy or scale

Can comfort a child grieving

Or fill the heart's lunch pail.

What is this way of listening

That a school bell could never know?

It searches between questions

Beholds breathing, wonder, flow.

Where are the grown-ups

Who are present before a child?

Leaning into the cracks of counsel,

Cherishing the silly, scared and wild.

Where no stories are too small,

No voice too shrill or simple

Not to know the burning hold of suffering

That leaves no hand unwrinkled.

The bell is not trained

To help those whose parents will divorce

Or assist the child, whose meds,

Will not stay on their course.

In the textbook for teaching

There are no cracks, clamor or distress.

Theory, after all, is perfect,

But life – an elegant mess.

Teetering on the edge,

Written slightly off the page

Are the notes we place ourselves

As we stumble from the cage.

Vanessa attempts to make explicit the taken for granted realm of emotions in teaching and illuminates the importance of attending to the emotional layer that is present in every learning environment. Like the school bell, teachers are not always able to listen to the underlying emotional needs of learners. While good educators are upheld as caring individuals, teacher education paradoxically provides little training to assist teachers in negotiating

emotionally laden spaces. Placing value on the next three qualities counteracts this fog of emotional disengagement.

Quality Two: Practicing Careful Discernment Supports the Negotiation of Emotional Terrain

It is important to recognize the human and ordinary nature of emotional engagement, as Michele highlighted, "I have walked with family and friends down similar paths. Aren't we all counsellors at some point in time?" Emotions do not suddenly emerge in learning~teaching, but rather, emotions are part of the very fabric of lived experiences. Nick described that, "The edge of counselling in a classroom is not intentionally therapeutic or steeped in the praxis of psychological or psychiatric methodologies." The edge of counselling is present in ordinary learning contexts; hence it is essential for teachers to hone their discernment skills. We do not perceive the edge of counseling as "bringing emotions in" but attending to *what is already there*. This reality merits more time and space for educators to understand their role around the nuances of emotional engagement. Discernment and instinct are embedded in this process and are vital to guiding students forward in their inquiry journeys.

Discernment is a form of insight, a sensitive careful judgment, which requires reading between the lines, a deep knowledge of emotions, and the ability to keep the big picture in mind. It is something that is continually practiced and is by no means a fixed trait. Married to discernment is instinct, powerful impulses based in feelings rather than reason. Often, instinct acts as a trigger for instructors during mentoring sessions and discernment leads them forward in negotiating particularly emotional landscapes.

The mentoring vignettes help to elucidate the complex intersection of discernment and instinct. With Olivia there was an intuitive opportunity missed, in which Instructor 1 did not sense the emotional importance of the touchstone story related to the mother's question. In the case of Amanda and Instructor 2, time and energy were being usurped by recursive emotional engagement. Increased discernment around the purpose of the course would have been useful to break this pattern. Instructor 2 perhaps became *too* good at listening, allowing Amanda to remain stuck in personal analysis, thus distracting them from the task at hand. The course is a place to explore the burning issues we face as educators and we remind our students that they may be the *site* for their topic, but they are not the focus of their inquiry (Chambers, 2004).

As Meaghan, former TI student and team member wrote, "The edge of counselling requires a balance of sharing and listening (to oneself and another); it requires us to use discernment around where our topics and questions lead us." Instructor 2 held a compassionate instinct to care for Amanda without the discernment to fully enact the intention of the course. What might have unfolded if she had been able to ask: What does your circumstance mean for you as a teacher? What is an appropriate level of disclosure in a professional context? What options do you have for receiving further appropriate support with your personal issues?

Quality Three: Shared and Courageous Vulnerability Facilitates Emotional Engagement

In TI, it is not required for students to engage emotionally, but often, as Maureen articulated, this occurs organically "in that moment when a student consciously or unconsciously drops her shield of emotional control and becomes vulnerable". When deep emotion is exposed, this vulnerability can easily be swept under the rug or avoided. Conversely, through shared and courageous practices, the mentor and mentee can choose to explore vulnerable spaces. The word

courage originates from the Latin word *cor* which means heart. In TI, we proceed with the intention of following our path with heart, and this often requires us to engage courageously.

TI instructors try to exemplify that "to teach is to be vulnerable" (Bullough, 2005, p. 23) and often share their own experiences of vulnerability. Students are more likely to engage emotionally in their topics when instructors walk alongside them in this type of heartfelt way. Nick wrote:

> The edge of counselling exists in the territory of emotions, spirits, intuitions, and hearts, where students and teachers are compelled to share personal truths with each other that engage and acknowledge the authentic human-ness of this practice of teaching.

Within these authentic and humane spaces, we engage more honestly around important, complicated and sometimes controversial topics. A space is created where both mentor and mentee can courageously move "toward a shared vulnerability – by being open about our fears, doubts, questions, and struggles – we invite our students to share their vulnerabilities too," (Oyler & Becker, 1997, p. 464).

If Olivia and Instructor 1 had been able to pursue the lack of response to the mother's comment, it would have put both into more vulnerable terrain. Instead, Olivia's fascination with clutter and Instructor 1's concordance with this direction resulted in a missed opportunity. The student's disruptive behavior clouded Olivia's ability recognize the positive attributes of this child, which was an uncomfortable subject that was left unattended. Addressing the issues around the question, "What's good about my kid?" requires going into spaces of potential shame and vulnerability – a difficult task, not typically asked of pre-service teachers. This work requires the act of holding gently, attending carefully without judging or trying to fix.

On the other hand, Instructor 2 became distracted as she followed Amanda into her emotions. As they became caught in the whirlpool of personal stories, they missed the opportunity to pursue a more meaningful inquiry. Concordantly, in her response to the prompt, Maureen commented, "We dare not open the door for our students into this murky territory without having a contingency plan in place." In fact, after analysis of these data, new protocol was added to the course. Now, at the beginning of each term, appropriate parameters around the edge of counselling are discussed and contact information for campus and private counselling options are distributed to all students.

When the right balance is established, practicing shared and courageous vulnerability sets a stage of trust and compassion, and the edge of counselling is more easily navigated. The instructor witnesses and walks alongside any vulnerability that may arise. It is then up to each student to decide which emotions to engage in, and how this journey should unfold.

Quality Four: Mindful Intention Support Navigation of the Edge of Counselling

Mentoring the TI process can be like running full speed along a tightrope. The meetings move quickly, with typically ten or fifteen minutes per session and anywhere from ten to thirty five students coming in back-to-back. There is a sense of needing to stay focused, to be aware of every step. When emotion laden touchstone stories come up, it becomes useful for the mentor to hold a particular type of space so that the mentee can begin to explore the entwined worlds where memory, emotion and pedagogical opportunity merge. This emotional work necessitates a protected space while, paradoxically, a space of unknown possibilities, a *safe-enough* space. Mindful intention plays a key role here.

As Michele wrote, "the edge of counselling is a liminal space requiring mindful intention, a threshold where new ways of being~doing~knowing can be embraced and enacted, where the courage to be present can lead to deep personal and professional change." And Maureen shared that as a mentor, "Sometimes the only response that is needed is calm reassurance and a quiet space that welcomes the emotions in." Meaghan reinforced this from her student perspective:

> The edge of counselling needs to be a space of "do no harm" practices where sometimes we just sit with the emotions and questions and sometimes we need to discuss or delve into the spaces. If either side forces the emotional work, the safety of this edge is compromised. It is a reciprocal act in which both parties need to maintain their responsibility to one another. A safe-enough space is created through the shared respect and openness that is created.

Mentoring at the edge of counselling requires mindfulness, an aware, undefended, and nonjudgmental presence to what is. It also requires the intent to create a safe-enough space and time for personal and professional exploration, compassionate listening, and doing no harm.

Instructors are continuously adapting to the needs of their students and each situation requires unique attention. As Eckhart Tolle (1999) articulated:

> Intense presence is needed when certain situations trigger a reaction with a strong emotional charge, such as when your self-image is threatened, a challenge comes into your life that triggers fear, things 'go wrong,' or an emotional complex from the past is brought up. (p. 46)

This type of presence is difficult to sustain and is at the heart of the mentoring relationship that fosters the edge of counselling. Sometimes instructors are able to engage their students more effectively than others. Instructors always strive to do the best for their students, but as in all

teaching, there are missed opportunities. We want to gratefully acknowledge the contribution of the instructors whose stories have helped us explain the qualities of the edge of counselling. Despite these two vignettes, their skills with the TI process are exceptional.

Quality Five: Emotions Can Act as Beneficial Catalysts towards Transformation

The three qualities of practicing careful discernment, shared and courageous vulnerability, and mindful intention provide a basis for transformational learning within the edge of counselling. By welcoming students into a space where emotions were not taboo, rich conversations began to unfold. Once acknowledged and held gently, significant stories like the one from Olivia's practicum, or personal situations like Amanda's, could become rich entry points into deeper understanding of a given topic. By entering into the complex conversations that dwell along the edge of counselling, vulnerability can become "the birthplace of joy, of creativity, of belonging, of love" (Brown, 2010). As Meaghan wrote:

> To me, the edge of counselling connects the personal with the shared. Here, the mentor is willing to share in the process of the student awakening to the emotions, questions and uncertainties held inside. It is a space where we must be deeply rooted in relational accountability, generous listening, trust, and honesty. Both the student and mentor need to approach the edge together for it to be a safe space and a place of 'do no harm.' In this space we are able to share our emotions, worldviews and truest selves with one another. It becomes a place where the real questions can be asked: the ones we are afraid or ashamed to ask, and the questions we may not know are there. This is not always a place of comfort for us, but it is a place where transformation can happen. There are many emotions that may arise in this space: shame, fear, pain, anger. Transformation can occur

> when we remain in touch with the emotions and questions that arise, while also staying relationally accountable to each other.

According to Nick, the edge of counselling:

> Is a place that has some risks associated with entering into it, but through the process of mapping and exploring this territory in each other and in our students, we have the potential to help engage more fully in the presence of being alive. This aliveness (or what Nhat-Hanh (2008) calls an awakened-state) is critical in societies of compassionate humans.

In Olivia's case, the mother's comment may have initially seemed tangential to questions of clutter and aesthetics. Yet, it can also be seen as a compelling space for a deeper inquiry to take place. What *was* good about that kid? What are the aesthetics of parent dynamics? What kinds of clutter might have been present in that short conversation? We can see the edge of counselling emerging as an opportunity for Instructor 1 to carefully walk alongside Olivia, as she fosters a more mindful understanding of her role as teacher. Conversely, Instructor 2 might have defined the professional nature of the course more fully, thus encouraging Amanda to see how her personal experience might inform her teaching.

To highlight the catalytic possibility of emotion, here is a third vignette where Instructor 3 blends the practice of discernment, shared vulnerability, and mindful intention to support Ashley as she explored her emotions around a distressing practicum experience.

Ashley and instructor 3: Anger collage.

Ashley entered the TI process by asking questions around Aboriginal Education, "What does it entail? How, as a student teacher, do we know when/to what extent we can incorporate [it

in our classrooms]? What is immersion vs. integration? What are the benefits?" These questions held a particular resonance for Ashley as a woman of Métis heritage, and initially she had a keen plan laid out as to how she would pursue her topic. Ashley's inquiry began to take unexpected paths however, when she broke down and revealed that she had withdrawn from her practicum before she had completed it, so as not to be failed. She cited "being too creative" as a debilitating source of conflict between her teaching style and that of her supervisor and mentor teacher.

As Ashley talked, Instructor 3 listened and encouraged her to express the complexities of her situation. When Ashley exclaimed that she was "still too angry" to share her story with her peers, Instructor 3 suggested that her anger might be an entry point into a deeper understanding of her experience, and gave Ashley a number of options to explore her feelings further. Ashley enjoyed creating collages and chose to engage that medium to depict the anger she felt (see Figure 2 below). Later, as the images were discussed in a mentor session, Ashley came to realize that she felt many other emotions along with the anger and a powerful touchstone story surfaced.

At one point in her practicum, Ashley had wanted to incorporate a sensory activity where her students would get to know a tree while blindfolded, and later find that same tree with full sight. To her dismay, Ashley's mentor teacher condemned the exercise, calling it a "tree hugging" activity. As she recalled her feelings, Ashley's eyes welled with tears:

> I just felt like I was being shut down and she didn't really respect who I was. For me [the activity] is who I am. It's like, you're calling my people...I don't know. it was kind of hard for me. ...So it made me lose my confidence. I ended up teaching in the sort of methods you were talking about, like up in front of the classroom, and note taking. And that's not who I am. But it was like I didn't know what else to do. I was in a bad spot

after my practicum... I felt like who I *was*, was the problem..... Like they were against me and not for me.

Figure 2: Ashley's anger collage

After this heartfelt expression, Instructor 3 and Ashley collaboratively devised a plan for what might be useful and not too vulnerable to share with her peers. Ashley decided to recreate the tree activity during the sharing time, and then asked her peers to help her articulating the importance of such an activity to any future naysayers in a professional manner. In a moment of courage Ashley surprised herself by sharing the taboo topic of her incomplete practicum with her

peers. Her vulnerability and honesty triggered a powerful conversation, as others related to her experience in mindful and empathetic ways.

Instructor 3 was able to support Ashley as her emotions became entry points into her topic, without getting stuck in them. The value of these qualities became clear in the rich conversation Ashley led with her peers and future colleagues. Attending carefully to emotional reactions, touchstone memories and patterned ways of being can become possible entry points into deeper understanding of both the students we teach, and who we are be~coming as teachers. Through holding these often-emotional topics gently and mindfully, teaching practice and teacher identity can be opened to transformation.

The Edge of Counselling from a Counsellor's Perspective

The TI process can be fraught with unexpected, awkward and possibly volatile emotions requiring a mindful and generous approach. As our analysis progressed, we felt unsure as to how instructors should navigate this terrain. While data analysis and written explorations brought us fuller understanding, the input and expertise of Indrus, our transpersonal psychologist team member, has been invaluable. Because her insight has been so useful we include here, her full response to the prompt. To me the edge of counselling…

> …Helps me imagine an educational environment where teachers and psychologists work together to create a learning spirit environment where all learners thrive. Engaging with the TI group in our day seminars has been exciting and informative. I am grateful for the opportunity to share my perspective on this timely topic.
>
> As a therapist, it is heartening to witness the TI group's willingness to explore where the edges of teaching and counselling meet and intertwine. Their enthusiasm to

learn how to better traverse the emotional minefields that at times may emerge from students in their classes is a testament to their understanding that the emotional and psychological state of a student cannot be hung on a coat hook outside the classroom door and put back on after leaving the class. I understand for some this may seem like a radical opinion but I believe counselling and teaching are, in fact, kissing cousins. They are innately interrelated.

All teachers engage in counselling, consciously or unconsciously, and the archetype of a counsellor is closely aligned to that of the teacher. Any therapist who has been in private practice will attest to the undeniable influence teachers have on the psyche of the developing self, often second only to the influence of the parent(s). Counselling is inherent within the teacher-student relationship, and it is vital to better prepare future teachers for this reality. I would go as far as to suggest that the primary role of the teacher is not to convey information, facts or figures or to teach math or science, but to support the child to know who they are, and essentially, to reflect back to the child their unique essence. If we view teaching from this perspective we would then also have to acknowledge and prepare teachers for their role as something akin to spiritual midwives, which I believe already exist with either affirmative or injurious effects.

I am aware my ideas are not in alignment with what is mandated or encouraged of teachers. I do not believe schooling and teaching, as they are presently being actualized, are attending to the foremost need of the child such that he or she know they are of supreme value to their community, and their society. If we aspire to inspire this in children, the first undertaking of education is to support children to gain the self awareness essential to reach their full potential. And my concept of living our potential is

not producing generations that are "educated" to produce more so a select few can over prosper and then call this system progress. Realizing potential is living with a sense of meaning and connectedness with those around us and with the earth herself, thus encouraging a path to right livelihood.

Now, when we must consider what kind of knowledge is most required in this age of mass information, it seems like an appropriate time for us all to embark on a discussion that centers around the inquiry… can a child learn anything of value if they do not know the value of their own personhood?

So really this is a plea to acknowledge what I believe is already underway: a vital paradigm shift in teaching and psychology like the fact that the Earth's separate oceans make up one larger ocean. Both fields could develop into significant leaders in transforming what is required to "educate" in today's beautiful, yet troubled world.

The Edge of Counselling in Teacher Education and Beyond

In many ways, the edge of counselling as discussed here, describes the most relevant findings to date in the larger TI research project. All teachers are implicated as being counsellors. Our work with Indrus has helped us to see that the edge of counselling is no longer a place to avoid, but a place to honour and engage in consciously. There is a need for courage, an opening to possibilities. And as Nick wrote, "we must strive to chart the territory of the edge of counselling within education systems to support moving beyond the superficial or debilitating barriers to a place of human-ness and awakening."

Exploring the edge of counselling is simultaneously rich and frightening, unsettling and exciting. Within these tensions are important nuggets that illuminate the way forward into a new

educational paradigm. Educators can choose to become familiar with the terrain of counselling and see it as an opportunity for learning and growth. Often, emotions need to percolate or simmer on the back burner; dealing with them later can be an important and necessary choice. But sweeping them under the rug, leaving them at the door or putting them into a vault that rarely gets opened can be harmful as emotions fester and burst from unnecessary pressure or neglect. With new teacher burnout rates in North America increasing from previous generations (Williams, 2012), attending to the edge of counselling may support long-term enthusiasm and deeper engagement in the profession.

We have found that the emotional landscape of learning and teaching is one that is often inadequately understood, acknowledged, and discussed within a professional teaching practice. Three entities emerged as integral to negotiating the edge of counselling: practicing careful discernment supports the negotiation of emotional terrain; shared and courageous vulnerability facilitates emotional engagement; mindful intention supports navigation of the edge of counselling. When these qualities are integrated, emotions can act as beneficial catalysts towards transformation.

Hence, these identified qualities act as a prescriptive set of values that we seek to practice in learning~teaching environments. By valuing emotions, and finding the methods to artfully engage our students in acknowledging their emotions, we have seen extra-ordinary transformations occur. We believe that learner~teachers that are given the permission to talk about emotions and are supported by skillful instructors will likely become teachers that continue to prioritize the emotional landscapes inherent in their own classrooms**.**

We have begun to describe some of the physical and temporal characteristics of the edge of counselling. In order to achieve the deeper connections and authentic human-ness that many

learners seek, educators must make time to create and hold safe-enough space for appropriate emotional engagement. In the TI course, our increasing awareness of the edge of counselling helps instructors to listen more carefully to the stories built into each pre-service teacher's experience. Our hope is that we are modeling a way that can be brought forward and shared with the many learners they will connect with in years to come.

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Reflections on Teacher as Change Agent in Indigenous Education

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Abstract

Becoming a teacher has involved a complex and multi-layered process of knowing, being, and living, and can be characterized as a multitude of becoming(s). Being and becoming an Indigenous educator calls for an added process and responsibility. It entails developing capacity beyond replicating the status quo and becoming a transformer and a change agent. The purpose of this paper is to relate this process and to address how "indigenizing" education and using First Nations cultural concepts can disrupt dominant discourse. Self-study is used as the methodology to relate a personal journey of developing capacity to create change in Indigenous education.

"We find ourselves on different sides

Of a line that nobody drew

Though it all may be one in the higher eye

Down here where we live it is two"

(Leonard Cohen, 2012, *Different Sides*)

Introduction

The opportunity to work with a group of Canadian university teachers and academics came about when I participated in the sixth annual CATE conference at McGill University, in November 2012. The topic of how teachers can develop capacity to exceed their socialized positions of the status quo was of interest to me. I have always felt that this is my purpose as an Indigenous educator, to move beyond replicating the status quo and focus on social justice issues. I had come to understand that the change process begins by interrogating our own positioning. Being engaged with like-minded educators opened up a new aspect of teacher research and I embarked on a journey to reflect on and gain more insight into how to be a positive force for change in Indigenous education.

As a teacher I believe in and espouse the power of writing. Writing about, reflecting on, and studying my teaching creates self-awareness and facilitates a change process. As Calkin (1994) states "writing can be a journey toward insight" (p. 7). For these reasons I am drawn to the notion of writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). It is through personal writing, poetry, and reflections, that I am exploring my own process of becoming and being a change agent in Indigenous education. I will relate those experiences as an elementary teacher, a grad student, and a university professor which I perceive as having been pivotal in my

development as a change agent and transformer in Indigenous education. Foregrounded in this work is the knowledge I have gained from my work with Elders.

Self-Study Methodology

It has been conceptualized that personal practical experience is useful for creating new theory. O'Reilly-Scanlon (2002) maintains "experience in and of itself is a resource and ought to be acknowledged as a basis for theory and research" (p. 75). Self-study methodology has been defined as teacher knowledge in action and can be used for professional growth (Mitchell and Weber, 1999; Loughran, 2004). I have used self-study previously (Weenie, 2010) as it is from personal knowledge and experience that I can begin to formulate a theoretical and conceptual base for teaching.

Self-study is a form of inquiry that has been used to study teacher education. It involves telling our own teaching stories. It is held that self-study is "a legitimate form of inquiry and valued source of knowledge" for teacher inquiry (Clarke & Erickson, 2004, p. 199). It has been my practice to use reflection and analysis to improve my teaching. The essence of self-study is to put together the small stones of experience and envision a new way of education, one that enhances personal power and agency. From a First Nations perspective we do regularly take the time to reflect and ponder life. It calls for a deepening process and relies on ceremony. Beliefs about the power of prayer and spirituality are embedded in me. In my journey I have sought answers through Aboriginal spirituality. It is held that "pedagogies of resistance [include] claiming spirituality" (Sefa Dei, 2011, p. 10). From working with Elders, I have come to know that it is our inner spirit that guides us. Reflecting on our own processes helps us to discover that balance and harmony within ourselves and it sets the stage for indigenizing our teaching.

Identifying Self

I am Plains Cree from Sweetgrass First Nation, Saskatchewan, Canada. I am currently a faculty member of the First Nations University of Canada, Indigenous Education program. I completed my doctoral degree in 2010. For my dissertation I related my journey as an Aboriginal academic. I decided to do a self-study as I wanted to tell my own story. It has been customary for academics to study subordinate groups and I wanted to represent myself rather than be an object of study. The intent of my work was to put forth First Nations perspectives as a valuable source of knowledge in academia.

It seems inescapable that as an Indigenous educator I should find myself speaking from the margin and on the other side within a Western education system that was intended to be democratic and inclusive. As Cohen (2012) writes, "We find ourselves on different sides, of a line that nobody drew." These words reflect how there is an arbitrary invisible line that marks who I am and where I come from. Lines created by ever changing Canadian Aboriginal policies have defined my identity. The term "Aboriginal" includes First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples. Each of these groups is unique and distinct. The term "Indigenous" refers to tribal peoples on a global level. I use these terms interchangeably but what distinguishes me is that I have treaty status and my work is primarily in the area of First Nations education.

I am a fluent Cree speaker and I actively participate in the cultural practices of my community. It is especially important for me to say that I still speak my language. After I completed my PhD in 2010, I had a chance to speak to the chief of our reserve and I spoke to him in Cree. He replied, "You still speak your language. That is what counts." It made me realize that regardless of how high my teaching credentials become, what counts to the people on the reserve, at the grass roots and community level, is that I have not abandoned my language.

Language is key to having an integrated sense of self. My language is that aspect of self that has helped me to remain intact as a person. I use my language to make sense of ideas in academia and I re-present them in ways that are relevant to my lived reality. My language has also helped me to see that cultural concepts embedded in language, things I observed in my childhood, things I witnessed and heard as a child are valid and worthy of discussion in the academy.

The issue that concerns me is how to work toward more equitable outcomes in education and in life for First Nations peoples. As a long time educator, addressing this issue has come to be a life work. When I was an elementary teacher, I had grown to be disillusioned with an education system that was not relevant to the lived realities of my students. I felt that I was simply "ushering my students into an established order of things" (Weenie, 2010). I was caught up in the Western theory of teaching and I had to question myself as to what was Aboriginal about my teaching. The current education system continues to serve Indigenous people very poorly. It is not the intent of this paper to reiterate the low literacy levels, the incarceration statistics of Aboriginal people, or the suicide rates of Aboriginal youth, statistics that tell us we are not faring well. Rather, I feel that it is time to rewrite the collective story and re-assert our selves.

It is from Elders and our ceremonies that that I have come to reconcile self and place. Sweetgrass is one of our healing medicines that is used for purification and cleansing. It is from such practices that I have come to believe in the power of our traditional ways. There are great mysteries around spiritual ceremonies. By participating in ceremonies, the deep subjective truth that Ermine (1995) described becomes apparent.

Through the work of Indigenous scholars like Ermine (2007), the place of Aboriginal knowledge has been articulated. The "ethical space of engagement" (Ermine, 2007) entails

focusing on community as the place of knowledge. It is a process that entails consultation and collaboration. Focusing on community knowledge and the knowledge keepers does not lay claim to any superior knowledge. It acknowledges the active humanity that First Nations people engage in on a daily basis. It had been forgotten that "the Old Ones have instilled in the young the sense of wonder and have sought to encourage young minds to recognize and affirm mystery aesthetically and spiritually" (Ermine, 1995, p. 110). I came to view these ideas as the main elements to an Aboriginal education system and I started to apply them to my teaching and research practice.

Aboriginal people are tasked with finding ways to overcome a legacy that is grounded in racism and colonialism. A pivotal aspect of this process it is to make central Indigenous knowledge perspectives. Ermine (1998) maintains that a "continuing process of naming the world, and naming the community ethos [is necessary] for understanding and the commitment to act" (p. 11). The longstanding philosophies and knowledge of First Nations communities must be acknowledged and reclaimed in order to disrupt and unsettle dominant discourse.

I participate in the sundance ceremony every year. The purpose of ceremony is to ask for "good health, help, and understanding," (Tim Poitras, 2007, personal communication). The ceremonies teach me about perseverance and humility. I learn that it is through self-sacrifice and introspection that we come to find truth and knowledge. Through Aboriginal spirituality I have come to understand that the connection with the metaphysical realm is what grounds us and makes us whole. The challenge for me is to translate this knowledge and understanding to the work that I do as an educator. There is a disconnect between the knowledge that I have gained from Aboriginal spirituality and the education system that I am working in. There are major differences between mainstream curriculum and how the world is perceived and organized in

First Nations worldview. These differences can best be described as the dichotomous facets of inner/outer space and the two disparate positions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ways of seeing the world (Ermine, 1995).

Thus began a personal evolution of thought and practice in working to make a difference and contribution to Indigenous education. In telling my story and relating my experiences, it is my hope that others may learn from what I have come to know in order to transcend the lines that bind us and keep us in our places. The solution for me, primarily, has been about making space for a way of knowing that is based on spiritual and cultural values. In order to speak to spiritual and cultural values, we need to be prepared to learn from and engage with Aboriginal people. It is by travelling to the source that we find truth and knowledge (Ah Nee-Benham & Cooper, 2000).

Becoming and Being a Teacher

Teaching
is the mapping out, negotiating,
creating, carving, shaping, navigating, the inner, outer,
inspiring, different, geopolitical, physical, contested, conflicting,
barren, marginal, contradictory, personal,
political, private, difficult
spaces.

Why did I become a teacher and when was the defining moment for me? In First Nations worldview and philosophy, the Elders tell us that we have all been given a gift to carry us in our

lives. Not all are gifted with the ability to teach. Each individual is gifted in unique and different ways. Our life experiences point us in the direction of who we are to be. Becoming a teacher for me has been about acting on and being open to the process. The knowledge and the guidance come in different ways. Becoming a teacher began with my own experiences as a learner and as an Aboriginal person. The work that I do now, in training teachers, is primarily informed by that positioning and perspective. The word for teacher in the Plains Cree language is o*kiskinahmakew*. The literal translation refers to one who paves or shows the way. It is understood that as teachers we take the lead in the change process. Dewey's approach of moving "from doubt to the resolution of doubt to the generation of new doubt," (Pine, 2009, p. 42), best reflects the process of what it is like to be a teacher. Cole (2011) maintains that teachers undergo "a process of weighing each new experience against their existing framework of understanding and then engage in a process of assimilating, accommodating, or refuting the new knowledge" (p. 225). As an Aboriginal educator, this process entails balancing new experiences with Indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge frameworks.

The journey towards greater knowledge of pedagogy led me to the highest places of learning in Western and in Indigenous settings. In many ways I can now recognize that I was being called upon to be a seeker of knowledge and to use that knowledge to create change. Aoki (2005) writes of the need to "open ourselves to discourses beyond" (p. 427). To this end, I have remained open to new teaching opportunities and I have taught at various locations in northern Saskatchewan and northern Manitoba, including the eastern Arctic. Each new experience has enriched my life and added to my capacity of how to be a change agent. As Calkin (1994) states, teaching requires us to take "the small threads and small stones of experience and of thought,

declare them significant, and make something of them" (p.21). Such has been my process of learning.

The starting point in training teachers to become agents of change is to understand and to articulate the epistemology of a teacher. Knowing oneself initiates the process. It is about developing an understanding of the transformative nature of education. It is about knowing and acknowledging that there is unequal access to education and unequal access to power. Interrogating power relations is a way to move beyond our socialized positions. Teachers who can move beyond perpetuating a system that works to marginalize certain groups of people and keeps power in the hands of a privileged few are self-aware and have knowledge of the various interlocking systems of racism, sexism and classism.

In order to be effective within the realities created by a colonial legacy, a certain changeability or fluidity is required to travel the various landscapes of the political and social in Indigenous education. When I think of changeability I am reminded of *Wesakecak*. *Wesakecak* is a trickster in our stories and he was able to transform himself at will to the situation at hand. Teachers need to be able to adapt to new situations readily. The concept of the *wihtikokan* in our stories is also instructive. The *wihtikokan* is a backward spirit. He does everything counter to the way things are normally done. Going against the grain of things also brings balance to our world. These are some of the cultural teachings that I rely on to help me teach others about working toward a transformative and culturally responsive education system. Clarifying and teaching others about these epistemological and pedagogical approaches creates a space for other ways of knowing. The teacher as transformer understands that it is about moving beyond merely replicating the dominant system by privileging Aboriginal knowledge in authentic ways. Teaching to transform is to be grounded in those ways of knowing and being.

The encounter between the non-Aboriginal world and the Aboriginal world is transformational. It is in the "in-between" space that the change process takes place. As Aboriginal educators we are situated in that "in-between space," or the "Third Space" (Bhabba, 1994). Roy (2003) maintains, "To take in-betweeness not as a passage to something more definite but to treat it seriously, as an open space within every process, we have to understand how the teacher can act from the middle, from the in-between spaces" (p. 76). It is held that working within the structures of things creates the capacity for change.

How do I go about developing capacity for teachers in training to see themselves as change agents? As the teacher, I facilitate a process of becoming and knowing for others, by sharing my own processes. It is also important for teachers in training to experience the world of teaching in Indigenous settings. Developing relationships with Elders and creating connections to First Nations communities is integral to Indigenous teacher knowledge. The use of culture camps as methodology to teach Indigenous pedagogy is one aspect.

Educator Transforming

Discussions about anti-racist, social justice and equity issues are not met without challenge. An incident that occurred while I was taking a graduate class in 2007 comes to mind. Important issues around racism and oppression were raised in this class. The incident occurred in a class discussion after we had viewed the video, *Orientalism*. Said (1979) conceptualized orientalism as the west's preoccupation with the orient and he defines orientalism as the "study of imperialism and culture" (p. 14). It examines the practice of othering and marginalizing based on difference.

The discussion began with one student saying that, in light of an expected influx of immigrant children, she was concerned about how to address the various needs of her students. My immediate reaction was that, here was another refusal to address the needs of Aboriginal children by bringing in the multiculturalism perspective. Razack (2001) maintains that a focus on cultural diversity and multiculturalism is an approach that "makes power relations invisible and keeps dominant cultural norms in place" (p. 9). This was how I was interpreting the discussion.

I related that I had attended a school board meeting in early 2006. A question had been raised about the demographics of Aboriginal children. Had the board considered the expected increase of Aboriginal children in their decision to close schools in an area that was predominantly Aboriginal? The answer given was that Aboriginal people were moving back to the reserves anyway. After I made reference to this meeting, one of the students stated that she was very offended by what I had said. Another student left the room angrily and slammed the door.

I was taken aback by these reactions and I did apologize and attempt to explain myself further. To me, this was an issue of systemic racism and not the fault of any one individual. I was quite affected by this incident. When class was over I called my sister and related what had just transpired in class. She said, "No one ever apologized to you." When I examined my feelings, I knew that I was experiencing fear mostly. These students were White and could wield more power than I could. I also talked to a colleague about this incident and I shared with her that I thought it would be best if I did not speak in class any more. She explained that one of the difficulties that teachers and administrators have is to listen to an Aboriginal perspective.

The incident had features of what Razack (2001) calls "the colonial encounter," (p. 3). The Other was speaking and there was a perceived threat. The encounter also reflected what

happens when "dominant groups meet subordinate groups" (Razack. 2001, p. 3). Other situations come to mind that are similar responses to what occurred in class. I have had White students respond angrily and accuse me of being racist and discriminating when I try to get them to examine White privilege. I have found it difficult to address racism and I need to find other ways of making my points clear. Later on in that same grad class we attended a public lecture presented by a Moslem woman. It was part of the 2007 Stapleford Lecture and Ms. Zarqa Nawaz, the creator of CBCs *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, was the presenter. This lecture provided insight on how to bring the message across in a way that does not create more dissension. I was intrigued by how she began her presentation, saying that she had come from Toronto, Ontario to Regina, Saskatchewan and was surprised to find that Moslems were despised. When she said that, the audience laughed with her. Making light of the situation was surprising to me, as racism is hurtful. She went on to say that this was a very empowering time for Moslem women and that she does not have a chip on her shoulder. She is part of a faith community and she does not let opposing views define who she is. I remember this lecture very well and I have tried to learn from it.

I thought more about the incident in the class and realized that what had really disturbed me was that no one at the school board meeting thought that this was an irresponsible position to take, and no one had responded, including me. Most of the time when I attend these meetings, I am an invited guest and I do not readily voice any opinions. Perhaps a reason that no one spoke out is that the words of those in power are so often taken without question or critique. Razack (2001) states "passivity with authority figures, is in fact a response to an alienating and racist environment," (p. 9). In retrospect, I consider how I could have responded differently at the

school board meeting and in the class. The lesson was that it prompted me to learn more about what I stood for and how to articulate it.

I read other works by Edward Said and I found them useful in trying to understand colonialism and racism. I was fascinated by his ideas on difference and oppression. Said (1996), in his article, "Representations of the Intellectual," states, "the intellectual, in my sense of the word, is neither a pacifier nor a consensus builder, but someone whose whole being is staked on a critical sense, a sense of being unwilling to accept easy formulas, or ready-made clichés, or the smooth, ever-so-accommodating confirmations of what the powerful say or conventional have to say, and what they do" (p. 23). This article made me consider that I must have the courage to say what is in my heart. Perhaps the situations that I have related were about saying unpopular things and being like the *wihtikohkan*, the contrary spirit in Aboriginal worldview. Maybe Aboriginal people a long time ago understood that the contrary is a way of bringing balance and order to the world.

Given the lack of recognition of Indigenous knowledge in Canadian education and the lack of meaningful engagement with Indigenous ways of knowing and being, it became clear to me that I needed to find ways to move beyond replicating the status quo. Being a teacher thus involved a multitude of becoming(s), and in the process, I was transformed on a personal and professional level. I realized the importance of finding new ways to be an agent of change and a transformer.

Teacher as Change Agent and Transformer

I taught a Social Studies methods class in Pond Inlet, Nunavut, in March 2013. One of our class discussions was about how to teach mapping skills to children. I became interested in

how our place has been mapped out for us and, in particular, I began to take notice of all the maps that were displayed in and around the community. It has been postulated that photographs are "a form of silent commentary containing their own ideology … [and are] both an archive and a learning tool" (Allnutt, 2011, p. 32). Using this idea I decided to use photos as a methodology to document my learning. The photos that I took include a collage of maps showing the hamlet of Pond Inlet, Nunavut, and a world map (Appendix A). The reason that I took photos of the maps is that mapping conveys the notion that the creator of these maps is, in effect, staking a claim to this space. Other photos that I took were of curriculum posters and scenes of the community (Appendix B). These photos serve as a memory tool and as a representation of new insight.

It occurred to me that the possibility of critique exists in our everyday living environment and as change agents we need to consciously examine how physical and geographical spaces have been determined and pre-determined. It is often not even questioned about who has made the maps that we follow. Hurren (2000) states, "the story starts even before the map is in our hands, in the act of surveying a space. Many accounts of colonization describe the imperial travelers and explorers searching out a vantage point," (p. 87). By mapping out the land, they had "authored the space before it was written on maps," (p. 87). This experience and new awareness reaffirmed for me how an ongoing process of critique and analysis is necessary to understand the deep roots of colonization. It is this knowing that can help us to be more informed as change agents and it can support our work toward formulating more equitable outcomes for colonized peoples.

Final Thoughts

My journey as a teacher has been mainly about making space for Indigenous knowledge. What I have shared is my own truth as influenced and shaped from what I have learned from Elders. I carry the teachings of the Elders in my everyday teaching. It is a personal transformation process that has allowed me to "indigenize" my pedagogical practice. The "indigenization" of education is the current rhetoric of academics. To a great extent the term "indigenization" is superficial if we do not make a conscious effort to live and experience cultural ways. Cook-Lynn (2008) states that "many American Indian writers today are not practicing singers and chanters, tribal ritualists, medicine healers, not even committed participants in what may be called a 'tribal world' (p. 330).

As part of a research project on culture camps, I had the opportunity to work with Elder Harry Blackbird from Ministikwan First Nation in April 2011. He stressed the importance of using tobacco in seeking knowledge. He stated that "If you want to know something and if you want to research something, if there is no tobacco used, you will never get your answers…If you want to teach and tell something, you have to ask if you do not know it. We as Elders are here sitting ready for you… You are in a hard line of work and you need help." He went on to say that the reason why Elders are prepared to share their knowledge is to help the children. He stated that language and cultural knowledge are increasingly being lost and he felt that children needed to be taught our ways. The essence of his words was that "Indigenous knowledge needs to come from a solid base. Students will trust your knowledge and they will learn from you if you demonstrate that you have gone through the protocols and process of seeking knowledge, and if you have experienced the things that you claim to know." Hence this is the process I have followed in order to be a change agent and transformer in Indigenous education.

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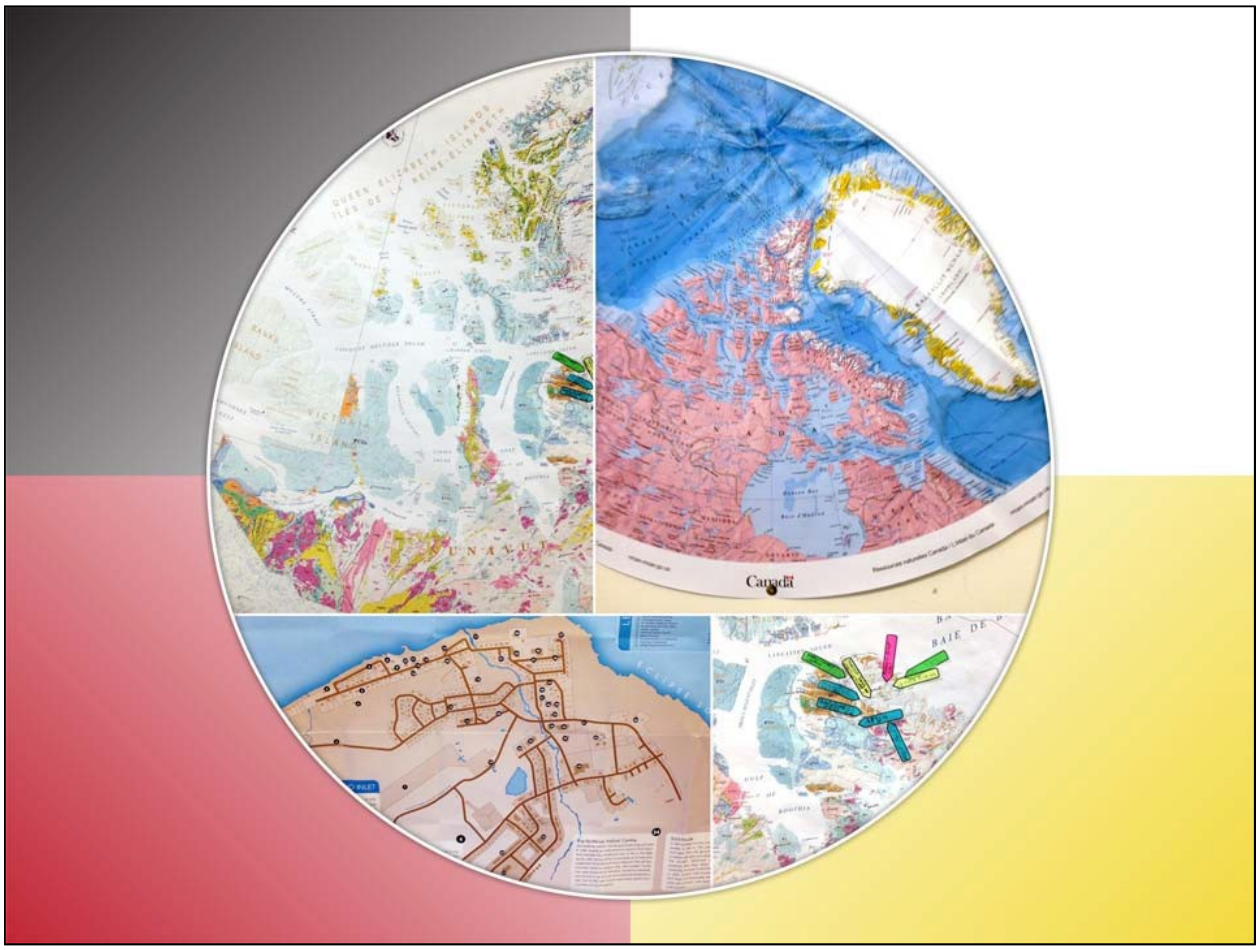
Appendix A



Appendix B